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Thomas Fanshaw Middleton D.D.

Late Lord Bishop of Calcutta.

Engraved by W.T. Fry after an Original Drawing in the possession of Mrs Middl

SERMONS

AND

CHARGES,

BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THOMAS FANSHAW MIDDLETON, D.D.

LATE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

WITH

MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE,

BY

HENRY KAYE BONNEY, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF BEDFORD.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

It is probable that the members of the church of England, and particularly the clergy, expect more of Bishop Middleton's writings than have already appeared in print.

A solemn injunction in his will prevents the fulfilment of these expectations; and all that can now be offered, is a collection of his sermons and charges, &c. which were made public by himself.

The remaining part of his works are "The Country Spectator," and "The Doctrine of the Greek Article." The former, not being wholly the production of his own pen, is omitted in this publication. The latter is reserved for another volume of his works.

Although the name of the first Protestant bishop of India, will be handed down to future ages by the monuments of his piety and exertion which remain in that country, yet it is thought due to his virtues, that memoirs of his life should be prefixed to this volume; and it should explicitly be stated, that the information they contain is authentic.

Not only the writer's personal friendship with Bishop Middleton, but the many valuable papers

communicated to him by favour of the Rev. H. H. Norris, of Hackney, enable him to assert this without hesitation ; and he is only doing justice to the worth of that zealous member of the church, when he takes this opportunity of acknowledging, with gratitude, the kind and valuable assistance which he has afforded in the prosecution of this work.

King's Cliffe, Sept. 6th, 1824.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF

THOMAS FANSHAW MIDDLETON, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

By HENRY KAYE BONNEY, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF BEDFORD.

MEMOIRS.

THE effect of religious precepts, varies according to the different dispositions of men. The timid are awed by their importance, whilst the depraved regard them as a heavy restraint. But when example is introduced to prove how much, under Divine assistance, has been done by men long removed from the stage of life, or who have fallen within the range of our observation, the careless may be roused by shame, and the apprehensive attracted by encouragement.

Biography is designed to produce this effect. It brings example into view; and is not less useful as a guide to inexperience, than delightful as a companion to wisdom. The following memoirs, it is presumed, may lay claim to this distinction, and shew the effect of religion and learning on the human character.

Thomas Fanshaw Middleton was the only son of the Rev. Thomas Middleton, rector of Kedleston in Derbyshire, and was born at that village, on the 26th of January 1769.[1] His mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of John Bott, Esq., of Burton upon Trent. The rudiments of knowledge he obtained from his father, a man of learning and respectability. On the 21st April 1779, he was admitted into Christ's hospital, where he was distinguished for serious

[1] Letter from Bishop Middleton, 1820. A short account of Bishop Middleton has been published by Cadell and Davies. See also the Christian Remembrancer, Rivington's Annual Register, and Annual Biography and Obituary, 1824.

reflection and steadiness of conduct?[1] Among his contemporaries and companions at school, were Sir Edward Thornton, His Majesty's late envoy extraordinary to the court of Sweden: Dr. Richards, author of "Aboriginal Britons," and "Bampton Lectures;" Mr. Coleridge the poet; Dr. Trollope, who at present presides over that seminary: and others who have since risen to distinction.

The advantages of education there liberally bestowed, were acknowledged with gratitude by Mr. Middleton in his progress through life. Even when engaged in the arduous duties of his bishopric in India, he remembered with feelings of filial regard the place where he had received so much benefit. Being desirous to express the sincerity of his thankfulness more strongly than by words, he, in the year 1821, transmitted to Christ's hospital a donation of four hundred pounds, and shortly after[2] he was elected a governor of that excellent institution.

From school he was admitted into Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where his habits were studious and his companions literary. He took the degree of B. A. in January 1792, being, in the scale of honours, fourth of the *Senior Optimes*; and in the March following, having been ordained deacon by the bishop of Lincoln, he entered on the duties of the church,

[1] The Rev. James Bowyer was at that time head master. "Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, a scholar and a gentleman. The manners of Mr. Middleton at School, though firm, were mild and unassuming." — See Christ's Hospital, Five and Twenty Years ago, in a volume styled Elia. Lond. 1823.

[2] In Dec. 1821. The letter sent to inform him of this circumstance, together with the necessary papers for the presentation of a boy to the school, did not arrive at Calcutta, till the end of August, 1822, after the bishop's death. The governors have since unanimously agreed, that his widow should make the appointment. Bishop Middleton, in a letter to a friend, requested him to send "Wilson's History of Christ's Hospital;" and added, "it would be unnatural in me not to have a warm interest in that institution; the source, perhaps, of greater good upon the whole, than any other school in England. I sent the requisite donation to entitle me to become a governor. And I bless God that I have been enabled to do somewhat towards the repayment of so vast a debt."

as curate of the parish of Gainsborough in Lincolnshire. Here he conducted a small periodical work, called "The Country Spectator;" which commenced on the 9th of October 1792, and closed on the 21st of May of the year following; and contained thirty-three papers, most of which were written by himself.

The following extract from one of these papers, probably expresses the sentiments of Mr. Middleton at this time of his life. "I look back to the hours, which I spent at college, with pleasing fond regret, and in vain sigh for their return. My feelings at this moment are admirably expressed in some charming lines of Cowley's dedicatory elegy; and as they happily have not been 'blown upon' (to use the phrase of Addison) by the swarm of learned flies who do little else than quote, I will subjoin the whole passage, together with a sonnet written in imitation of it.

"O mihi jucundum Grantæ super omnia nomen!
O penitus toto corde receptus amor![1]
Ah mihi si vestræ reddat bona gaudia sedis,
Detque Deus doctâ posse quiete frui!
Qualis eram cum me tranquillâ mente sedentem
Vidisti in ripâ, Came serene, tuâ;
Mulcentem audisti puerili flumina cantu;
Ille quidem immerito, sed tibi gratus erat.
Tunc liquidis tacitisque simul mea vita diebus,
Et similis vestræ candida fluxit aquæ.
At nunc cœnosæ luces, atque obice multo
Rumpitur ætatis turbidus ordo meæ.

"Cambridge! dear name, at whose transporting sound,
A pang of fond remembrance thrills my breast;
O could those hours return, which friendship blest,
Which letter'd ease, the muse, and C******** [2] crown'd!

[1] The author of the Country Spectator has not quoted the lines as they are in the original. Many of Cowley's verses are omitted. See Cowley's Works, folio edition.

[2] The word Coleridge was probably intended to supply the deficiency in this line. It has been said that Mr. Coleridge's mind was first directed to poetry, by reading a volume which had been presented to him by his schoolfellow Mr. Middleton.

How calm my soul, when oft, at parting day,
Cam saw me musing by his willowy side,
The while I would recite some raptured lay,
Whose ling'ring murmurs floated down the tide;
Yet ah! too short is youth's fantastic dream,
Ere manhood wakes th' unweeting heart to woe.
Silent and smooth Cam's loit'ring waters flow:
So glided life, a smooth and silent stream:
Sad change! for now by choking cares withstood,
It scarcely bursts its way, a troubled boist'rous flood."[1]

His reputation as a clergyman and a scholar introduced him to the notice of Dr. John Pretyman[2], archdeacon and preceptor of Lincoln, and brother of the bishop; who, in the year 1794, intrusted him with the education of his two sons.

The charge reposed in him required his removal to Lincoln, and afterwards to Norwich, where Dr. Pretyman resided as a prebendary. Mr. Middleton's talents and acquirements soon introduced him to the literati of that city and neighbourhood; and his eloquence as a preacher was felt and acknowledged by the congregations whom he addressed: particularly at St. Peter's Mancroft, of which he was afterwards the curate.[3]

In 1795, the father of his pupils presented him to the rectory of Tansor in Northamptonshire, vacant by the promotion of Dr. John Porter to the see of Killala in Ireland. His mind was now intent upon domestic happiness, and in 1797 he married Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of John Maddison, Esq. of Gainsborough and of Alvington in the county of Lincoln; whom he found a companion qualified to appreciate the character of the man, and to relieve the labour of the student. She was his amanuensis in transcribing all his manuscripts for the press: an employment which, as he declared to his

[1] See the Country Spectator, p. 128.

[2] It has been reported that Dr. Pretyman turned his attention to Mr. Middleton, after reading one of the numbers in the Country Spectator.

[3] He became curate of St. Peter's Mancroft in the city of Norwich about the year 1799.

friends, she executed with cheerfulness and accuracy. Indeed, the high sense which he entertained of her virtues, and of her incessant care to promote his happiness, was manifested in every stage of his studious and useful life. A remarkable instance of this is recorded in an inscription written by him on the blank leaf of the copy of his work on "the Greek article," which he presented to this estimable person on the day he completed his thirty-ninth year.[1]

In 1802, Mr. Middleton received from the same patron the presentation to the consolidated rectory of Little Bytham, with Castle Bytham annexed, which he held with Tansor by dispensation. His mind and inclination were now directed to the latter place, where he intended to reside, but the charge of his pupils, for whose welfare he felt a lively interest, and the solicitation of his friends and parishioners, still detained him at Norwich.

His fondness for local history, as well as general information, induced him to make excursions into the coun-

[1] To Elizabeth,
his most amiable and beloved wife,
who, with unwearied assiduity,
correctly and elegantly
transcribed the whole of this work
for the Press,
this Copy was presented
by the Author,
on the 26th Jan. 1808,
on which Day
he completed his 39th Year.
That the remembrance of conjugal affection
so honourable, so exemplary,
may not prematurely perish,
the Possessor of this Volume
in future times
is conjured,
by the reverence due to the dead,
to spare,
to preserve, this memorial.
T. F. M.

try [1], in which he was often accompanied by Dr. Sayers [2], whose taste for antiquarian research corresponded with his his own, and whose character he held in the highest esteem.

But graver studies occupied his chief attention, and particularly the language of scripture. He was now writing his principal work, "The Doctrine of the Greek Article, applied to the Criticism and Illustration of the New Testament," an elaborate production of distinguished merit. Former critics had not directed their learning to this part of speech sufficiently to deliver a full and satisfactory account of it; and the want of such a work was justly lamented by all those who knew how much the meaning of a passage depends upon the article. Mr. Middleton supplied this deficiency. And when to this is added the importance of an accurate interpretation of the New Testament, the learned and acute author merits not only the applause of the philologist, but also the gratitude of the theologian.

In the prosecution of this work he had to investigate the laws of the Greek idiom; and correctly to ascertain the uses of the article. In order to do this, "he found it impossible to proceed with any thing like certainty, unless the article itself were first clearly defined, and its nature well understood. It was, therefore, his endeavour, in the first part of his volume, to resolve the question, "What is the Greek article?" and to shew that the solution offered would explain its prin-

[1] The writer of these memoirs is indebted to Archdeacon Wrangham for the following Greek lines, written by his friend, Mr. Middleton, in the album at Bracondale Priory, near Norwich: —

Τίς πολ' ἐὼν, ὦ ξεῖν', ἐπινίσσεαι; ἦ θεοσέπλωρ;
Ἄζεο δὴ προτέρης λείψανον εὐσεβίης·
Εἰ δ' ἀρχαιολόγων τις ἔφυς, πολιδέρκεο φωλῶν
Ποικίλα ἐαμβήσας ἔργα παλαιγενέων·
Εἰ δὲ φύσις καὶ θέλξε τεὸν νόον, ἠνίδ' ὁ χῶρος
Ἀγροῖερω γενύσι κάλλει λειπόμενος·
Εἰ δέ σε φίλαλο Μῶσα μελίπνοος, ἄνθεα Μώσης
Ἐνθάδε μὴ φθονέης, δῶρα ποθητὰ, φέρειν.

[2] Dr. Sayers died in 1817, beloved and lamented. He was author of several works; one of which he dedicated to Mr. Middleton.

cipal uses in the Greek writers. In the second part he applied to the text of the New Testament, the doctrine laid down in the part preceding." Such is the outline which he himself draws in the preface.

Before he completed this work, the younger of his pupils, Henry George Pretyman, a youth of great promise, shewed symptoms of a rapid decline, and was ordered to the mild climate of Bristol. But the disorder was too far advanced to admit of cure, and terminated in the death[1] of his

[1] He was buried in Bristol cathedral, where the following inscription, written by Mr. Middleton, and inscribed on a marble tablet, records his virtues: —

M. S.
Adolescentis præstantissimi
Henrici Georgii Pretyman,
Viri Reverendi Johannis S.T.P.
Archidiaconi Lincolniensis,
Filii natu minoris.
Indoles adspecta simul et probata est:
Commendârunt animus alacer et erectus,
Inventionis mira facilitas et ubertas,
Judicium subtile et perelegans.
Mores suavissimi, simplices, sinceri:
Officio sibi devinxit suos,
Comitate universos.
Viribus naturæ satis fidens
Laborem non est aspernatus,
Egregium daturus specimen,
Si vita suppeditavisset,
Doctrinæ, Eloquentiæ, Virtutis.
Fide Christianâ adeò imbutus est,
Ut sacrosanctam Scripturam
Libenter versaret valens,
Ægrotans inde peteret unicè solatium;
Et velut quem præsentiùs numen adspexerit,
Quem, ingravescente tabe,
Beatiorem indies sese prædicaret,
Vultu pulchritudinem humanam exsuperans
Animam efflavit
XVII. Cal. Nov. A. C. MDCCCVII.
Vixit annos XVII. dies XXII.
Hoc marmor ponendum voluerunt Parentes
Talem lugentes ereptum,
Donatum Dei benigni munere
Gratè, piè profitentes.

young friend, on the 16th of October 1807; an event which deeply afflicted Mr. Middleton, who not only esteemed his pupil for the endowments of his mind, but admired him for the qualities of his disposition.

Shortly after this event Mr. Middleton wrote the dedication of his volume on the Greek Article, addressed to Dr. Pretyman, in which he laments the loss, and commemorates the virtues of his pupil. This is dated January 1st, 1808; and the work soon appeared before the public.

The elder [1] of his patron's sons was at this time at Cambridge, and Mr. Middleton, no longer engaged in tuition, felt the obligation of residing on one of his benefices. His friends at Norwich, desirous of retaining him in their society, offered to procure for him preferment in that city, but a strong sense of duty compelled him to decline their proposal, and he determined to fix his residence at Tansor. Accordingly, in 1808, he quitted Norwich and went to Oundle, two miles from his rectory, and immediately entered upon the duties of his parish. The same year he took the degree of D.D. at Cambridge, and preached the commencement sermon before that university.

The rectorial house at Tansor being repaired, and fit for the reception of his family, he removed thither in the spring of the year following. The congregation now under his care differing materially from that which he had left at Norwich, he accommodated his style in the pulpit to the capacity and circumstances of his audience. And to this, adding benevolence, and hospitality, he gained the affection of his flock and the esteem of his neighbours.

Early in 1809, he was collated by Bishop Pretyman to a stall in the cathedral of Lincoln. In June, he preached the sermon at the visitation of the diocesan at Grantham, entitled, "Christ divided," which was published in the year following:

[1] Now prebendary of Lincoln and rector of Sherrington, Bucks.

and in 1816 he began to act as a magistrate for the county of Northampton, an office which did not accord with the duties of the tutor or habits of the student: yet, during the short time he filled this situation, he closely applied his talents to the cases that came before him, and administered the law with the strictest impartiality.

In the year following he resigned the livings of Tansor and Bytham for the vicarage of St. Pancras, Middlesex, and the rectory of Puttenham, Hertfordshire, and became resident at St. Pancras vicarage in Kentish Town. In April 1812, he was collated by the Bishop of Lincoln to the archdeaconry of Huntingdon: and in the May following he visited the clergy, and delivered a charge, which requires no comment in these memoirs. It will be found in the subsequent pages.

A larger field was thus open to the exercise of his talents, and he entered upon it with a mind comprehensive in its views, and devoted to the cause of religion. The deplorable condition of the parish of St. Pancras, in which he found a population of nearly fifty thousand persons with no other than the ancient and very small village church, with the chapel in Kentish Town, and the lower classes in consequence excluded from communion with the church of England, engrossed his attention and called for his exertions. The legislature only could afford a remedy for this evil. A bill was therefore introduced into parliament at his suggestion, and in concurrence with many respectable parishioners, for power to erect a new church. His project, however, met with opposition from several of the inhabitants: and notwithstanding the arguments which he produced in a printed address[1], to prove the necessity of carrying the plan into execution, petitions were procured against the measure, and the bill was lost in the second reading.[2]

[1] See the Address at the end of this volume.

[2] Happily for the inhabitants of this populous parish, a subsequent attempt to obtain this great and necessary object has succeeded, and a new and handsome church has been built.

A man of Archdeacon Middleton's character could not long remain unnoticed by the higher clergy of the metropolis: and his exertions in the pulpit were often called for in behalf of charitable institutions. Dignitaries and prelates now cultivated his society. With Bishops Tomline, Burgess, and Law; Lord Kenyon; Archdeacons Cambridge, Pott, and Watson; Mr. Le Bas, Mr. Norris, and Mr. Joshua Watson, of Hackney, he formed a lasting friendship. To these must be added, Mr. Ward of the accountant-general's office, the archdeacon's relative: whose esteem for him commenced in early life, and was only interrupted by death.

At this time the Rev. George D'Oyly and the Rev. Richard Mant, chaplains to the archbishop of Canterbury, were preparing for the press a Family Bible, under the sanction of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge: and Archdeacon Middleton's judgment was solicited in revising the notes contained in the early part of that useful and excellent Work. About this time also, a new series of the British Critic was projected: and it was purchased on purpose to place it in his hands. The Prospectus was written by him, and he edited the first number [1], but there his superintendence terminated.

In March 1813, Mr. C. A. Jacobi [2] having been recommended to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, as one of their missionaries to India, the archdeacon was requested to deliver a charge to him, previous to his departure. The charge was received by the society with marked approbation, accompanied by a request that it might be published; and it is inserted in the body of this work.

The state of religion in India, hitherto neglected, at length attracted the attention of the legislature: and in an act for the renewal of the charter of the East India Company, a provision was made, which enabled the crown to constitute a bishopric,

[1] The 1st, 2d, 5th, 7th, and 8th articles in this number, were written by Archdeacon Middleton.

[2] See the Society's Report for 1813. Mr. Jacobi, a German divine, died at Tanjore 22d Feb. 1814.

with such jurisdiction and functions, as should from time to time be defined by His Majesty, by letters patent under the great seal of England. The company was charged with salaries, to be paid to the bishop and three archdeacons; Calcutta was erected into a bishop's see; and Archdeacon Middleton selected to fill the important station.

At first he shrunk from the magnitude of the charge, and declined it. But, upon more mature consideration, he thought it unworthy of a Christian minister to suffer the difficulty of the office, or dangers of the climate, to deter him from the performance of a duty, to which Providence seemed to call him. "You will easily imagine," (he says, in a [1] letter addressed to the writer of these memoirs,) "that in accepting this office, I have sustained a severe conflict of feelings. I had even declined it. But when I came to settle the account with my own heart, I really found that I had little to allege in behalf of my decision. I began to suspect that I had yielded to some unmanly considerations, when I ought rather to have counted my comfort, and my connexions, and my prospects at home, as altogether worthless in comparison with the good, of which it might possibly be the design of Providence to make me the instrument. How far, even now, I have reasoned rightly, God alone knows; but I have endeavoured to view the subject impartially, and I trust in the Almighty to bless the work in which I am to engage."

He was consecrated on the 8th of May, 1814, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishops of London, Lincoln, and Salisbury, in the chapel of Lambeth Palace: Dr. Rennell [2], Dean of Winchester, having preached the sermon; a sermon so highly appreciated by the bishop, that he regretted it was not published.

The opportunity of extending Christianity in the East, was thus enlarged by the establishment of episcopacy in Calcutta;

[1] Dated 14 March, 1814.

[2] Also Master of the Temple, London, and a friend of Bishop Middleton.

and the appointment of so zealous a member of the church, and so firm a supporter of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, as Bishop Middleton, could not fail of being noticed by that institution. The committee granted his lordship a vote of credit to the extent of 1000*l.*, to promote the objects of the society in India, in such ways as he should deem most consonant to the society's designs; and on the 17th of May he attended a special meeting of the members in Bartlett's Buildings, to receive their valedictory address, delivered by Dr. Law, Lord Bishop of Chester, which was as follows: —

"MY LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA,

"Though I am sensible that many members of this society would discharge the office I have undertaken with much greater weight and effect; yet still, on every other account, most sincerely do I rejoice that it has fallen to my lot to offer to your lordship this address, from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

"In the first place, we hail the appointment of a bishop in India as a fortunate and favourable omen to the cause of religion. The establishment of episcopacy there, will, as we have reason to think, most effectually check every erroneous doctrine, stop the wild progress of enthusiasm, and spread the knowledge of uncorrupted Christianity over a country of great extent, and of an immense population. That it is you who have been singled out for this new and important station is an additional cause of great and general satisfaction. 'When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth.'

"This same event cannot also but be a source of the purest pleasure to a mind like yours. A wide field is opened to your talents and zeal. To you is committed the apostolical charge of diffusing the light of the Gospel, where its rays have scarcely penetrated; and of becoming, in the hand of Providence, as we hope and pray, the blessed means of establishing multitudes in the faith.

"But this our joy, both on a public and private account, is mixed, as most other gratifications are, with feelings of a different and opposite nature. We lose the friend — the zealous and able advocate of our civil and ecclesiastical establishments, — the warm supporter of this excellent institution. It cannot, therefore, be a subject of surprise or blame, if, on the present occasion at least, our feelings of this kind too much predominate.

"The circumstances of this day may, perhaps, sometimes recur to your mind, when on the trackless deep, or in a distant clime. But, whenever they do recur, be assured, that you are bearing with you the esteem, the gratitude, and the affection of every member of this society. As to myself, it will ever be the source of pleasing recollection, that I have mingled my regrets with theirs, and that I have offered to you what I never offer but at the shrine of virtue, the tribute of my respect and regard.

"But I have too long detained you from the immediate business of this meeting. Let me then, now, in the name of this very venerable society, present to you their

"VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

"The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge desire, with sentiments of profound respect, to offer to your Lordship their sincere congratulations on your elevation to the episcopal see of Calcutta.

"The intercourse of a religious character, which has long subsisted between this society and the British dominions in the East Indies, had given us abundant reason to recognize the indispensable necessity of the establishment of an episcopal government there, in order to secure, in any competent measure, the due celebration of the ordinances of divine worship, and the advantages of Christian instruction to the European inhabitants: and not less frequent occasions have arisen, to satisfy us, that without this important additional instrument

the endeavours must be, in a great degree, hazardous and ineffectual to propagate a pure and reformed faith among the Pagan and Mahommedan nations of that vast empire. It is with unfeigned satisfaction, therefore, that we saw, in the recent act for the renewal of the charter of the Honourable East India Company, a provision made towards the attainment of this unspeakable blessing, in the power given to his Majesty to erect and constitute a bishoprick, with such jurisdiction and functions, as should from time to time be limited by his Majesty, by letters patent under the great seal of the United Kingdom.

"The great benefits, which this society has derived from your Lordship's counsels and co-operation, in all its undertakings; and not the least, in that department which relates especially to the religious concerns of the eastern parts of the world, require of us to declare, that the measure of our utmost hopes, in this matter, was amply fulfilled, when we saw you called, under the special Providence of Almighty God, by the command of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, to this high and arduous office.

"From this moment, therefore, this society looks with fresh hopes towards the East; and feels itself under a pressing obligation to persevere in, and augment to the utmost of its power, those efforts in which it has been long engaged, in behalf of the maintenance there, and the farther advancement, of the kingdom of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

"And, if we may be permitted, on this interesting occasion, briefly to advert to the nature of those efforts, we would beg leave to remind your Lordship,

"—— *That* more than one hundred years have elapsed since the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge first began to labour in this vineyard.

"—— *That*, in the progress of this interval of time, through the aid of our missionaries, the consolations and instructions of the gospel have been extended to many of our countrymen placed (otherwise) in circumstances of peculiar spiritual

privation and danger; and that many thousands of the natives have been converted from idols to the living God.

"——*That*, even from the earliest date of our connection with the East, we have made it a special object of our concern to afford to the natives an opportunity of hearing and reading the word of God in their vernacular tongues.

"——*That* the Liturgy of the church of England has likewise been translated and printed by our missionaries, and is used by them in public worship.

"——*That* many other religious books and tracts, in the English and other European languages, and in sundry of the native dialects of Hindostan, have been, from time to time, sent over by this society, or have been translated and printed there under its patronage, to the incalculable spiritual advantage of multitudes of our fellow-creatures.

"And, finally,——*That*, under the persuasion of the essential importance of engrafting the best principles in the young and tender mind, this society *have* ever been anxious to promote and encourage the erection of schools for the instruction of the children, as well of Europeans as natives.

"These, in few words, have ever been, and still are, the objects in which this society is especially desirous to be made an instrument, in the hands of divine Providence, for the maintenance and propagation of the Christian religion, in the British dominions in the East Indies; and these, we have the consolation to know, will be among the choicest objects of your Lordship's solicitude and care, in your weighty charge.

"We entreat, therefore, with all deference and respect, that you will condescend to honour, with such portion of your countenance, protection, and superintendence, as they may seem to deserve, those exertions, which henceforward, by the blessing of divine Providence, this society may be enabled to make, in prosecution of the above designs.

"And we beg further respectfully to invite your favourable attention to certain printed documents, in conformity to which, diocesan committees, in connexion with this society,

have been recently established, under the special recommendation and patronage of the Right Reverend Prelates of England and Wales, in almost all parts of this kingdom, and from which the most beneficial consequences have been found to ensue. A great eastern institution to be erected upon this model, and embracing, in friendly combination, the several grand objects already referred to, has long been a matter of the earnest and anxious wishes of this society; and to the uttermost would all our desires be gratified, if the establishment of such an institution might be coeval with the auspicious moment of your Lordship's arrival there, and be permitted to grow up under the shelter of your fostering wing.

"That the Almighty may bless you with a prosperous voyage, and crown with ample success your Lordship's efforts for the advancement of his kingdom and glory, is the earnest prayer of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge."

To this address Bishop Middleton made the following reply: —

"MY LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER,

"I cannot proceed to notice the interesting and important matter contained in the valedictory address, with which I have been honoured, without having first offered to your Lordship my sincere acknowledgments for the singular kind expressions with which your Lordship has been pleased to introduce it. I shall, indeed, my Lord, to adopt your Lordship's affecting language, whether 'on the trackless deep, or in a distant clime,' recollect 'the circumstances of this day,' and most refreshing will it be to my wearied spirits in moments of difficulty and discouragement, for which I must not be unprepared, to be permitted to believe, on the authority of your Lordship, that I bear with me the favourable opinion and friendly regards of the members of this venerable society. My pretensions to this high distinction, the kindness of your Lordship's nature has exceedingly over-rated; but my sense of its value I cannot exaggerate, or even adequately express.

In the approbation of this society is conveyed to my feelings whatever could be due to the best directed efforts, and most signal services, in the cause of religion, of order, and of peace: it is the testimony of those who are distinguished by knowledge, by rank, by piety, and by Christian zeal in the greatest of Christian nations, and in the proudest period of her existence.

" Impressed with these sentiments of the venerable society, and persuaded of the vast importance of the objects to which its labours have been unceasingly directed, I need not hesitate to offer it the pledge of my assurance, that in the distant empire, the spiritual concerns of which the Almighty has committed to my superintendence, I shall feel it to be my duty, so far as my ability may extend, to countenance and to promote the objects of the society, especially those to which my attention has been called in its address. In common with the society, I have ever been of opinion, that if the difficulties of diffusing the light of the gospel through the eastern world can be successfully encountered, (and the sure word of God forbids us to despair,) it can be only by establishing, among our countrymen in Asia, the form of church-government derived from the apostles, by inculcating attention to divine ordinances, by unity of doctrine in the teachers of religion, and by a departure from iniquity among all who name the name of Christ. That the society has, for more than a century, unremittingly endeavoured to instil into the minds both of the natives and of our countrymen in India, sentiments favourable to the diffusion of the gospel, is admitted by all, who are acquainted with its proceedings, and whose candour is open to the truth. Much of the Christianity, which subsists in those regions, has been planted under its auspices, and nurtured by its care: and the exemplary conduct of those holy men, whom it has sent forth to bear the glad tidings of the gospel of peace, their temperate zeal, their conciliating manners, their patience in well doing, and their devotion to the cause of Christ, have supported the credit of the mission-

ary name, and have contributed to refute the misrepresentations of ignorant or interested men.

"I am not unacquainted with the printed documents to which the address refers me, in conformity to which, diocesan committees, under the sanction of the Right Reverend Prelates of England and Wales, have been established in most parts of this kingdom; and I pray for their multiplication, as the most effectual means of extending the blessed influence of the society at home. Happy, indeed, shall I deem myself, if Providence should enable me, by any exertion of diligence and zeal, to establish an eastern institution, framed upon the same admirable model, and co-operating with the society in its benevolent designs. But whatever be the result of this and of my other endeavours, I would only entreat, that the society will be assured of my earnest desire to promote the objects which it has this day recommended to me; and not to impute to indifference or inattention any failure or delay, for which the acknowledged difficulties of my situation may afford a reasonable excuse. Unfeignedly could I wish, that so arduous an undertaking had been committed to stronger powers; but my trust is in the Almighty, who can call forth strength out of weakness: already am I deeply impressed with the awful responsibility of my charge: and in the execution of my duties, I shall feel, that under the divine protection, I possess some security against the mischiefs of an erroneous judgment, in my firm attachment to the doctrines and discipline of the church of England.

"I now take leave of the venerable society, with my warmest thanks for this and every other mark of its regard, desiring to be remembered in its prayers."

On the 19th of May, 1814, Bishop Middleton was elected a fellow of the Royal Society; and having taken leave of his friends in the country, on the 8th of June, he and Mrs. Mid-

dleton, and Archdeacon Loring [1], sailed from Portsmouth in the Warren Hastings for Bengal. It is not to be supposed that a man of the Bishop's acute feeling could leave his native country, uncertain of ever seeing it again, with the indifference of a stoic. His friend, Archdeacon Thomas [2], who attended him to the shore, witnessed how properly the zeal for the cause in which he was engaged and his attachment to his connexions in England were blended.

On the voyage the vessel touched at Madeira, and the Bishop preached on that island: being, probably, the first prelate of the English church who had performed that office before its inhabitants.

He arrived at Calcutta on the 28th of November of the same year [3], and was received without any public testimony

[1] Three archdeaconries were erected at the same time as the bishoprick, and persons appointed to fill them. Archdeacon Loring to that at Calcutta, Archdeacon Mousley to that at Madras, and Archdeacon Barnes to that at Bombay.

[2] Archdeacon of Bath.

[3] During the whole of the voyage this exemplary man applied his mind to such subjects as were likely to be useful in his new station. He read Hebrew and Persian, as well as theology; and, above all, he laid down the following rules for his future conduct: —

"Invoke divine aid.—Preach frequently, and as 'one having authority.' —Promote schools, charities, literature, and good taste: nothing great can be accomplished without policy. — Persevere against discouragement. — Keep your temper. — Employ leisure in study, and always have some work in hand. — Be punctual and methodical in business, and never procrastinate. — Keep up a close connexion with friends at home. — Attend to forms. — Never be in a hurry. — Preserve self-possession, and do not be talked out of conviction. — Rise early, and be an economist of time. — Maintain dignity without the appearance of pride: manner is something with every body, and every thing with some. — Be guarded in discourse, attentive, and slow to speak. — Never acquiesce in immoral or pernicious opinions. — Beware of concessions and pledges. — Be not forward to assign reasons to those who have no right to demand them. — Be not subservient nor timid in manner, but manly and independent, firm and decided. — Think nothing in conduct unimportant and indifferent. — Be of no party. — Be popular, if possible; but, at any rate, be respected. — Remonstrate against abuses, where there is any chance of correcting them. — Advise and encourage youth. — Rather set than follow example. — Observe a grave economy in domestic affairs. — Practise strict temperance. — Re-

of respect. But his private reception was such as was due to him as a bishop. There was no house appropriated to the see, and his Lordship and his family were under the necessity of living with a stranger until he could obtain a place of residence fit for his establishment.

Bishop Middleton soon found himself on terms of respect with the persons in authority; and received encouragement from the Earl of Moira, Governor General, at that time absent from Calcutta with the army against Nepaul. The attention of the clergy was naturally directed to him. Some of them communicated statements of religion and morals in the remote parts of his extensive diocese; and he expressed himself grateful for the result of their personal experience and local observations. He was deeply sensible of the difficulties attending the discharge of the duties which Providence had assigned him; and he knew not from what source he could hope to derive more effectual aid, with the divine blessing, than from the exertions of those who, having been long resident in India, were concerned for the honour of the Christian name; and who, among other means of recommending it to the surrounding nations, would maintain, to the utmost practical extent, the holy ordinances and decent rites prescribed in our national church.[1] Such were Bishop Middleton's sentiments at his entrance upon this important station.

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member what is expected in England: — and, lastly, remember the *final account*."

On his voyage he addressed several letters to his friends in England; and, amongst these, one to a very young person, which at once shows him to have been a man of affectionate and religious feeling. "I am very anxious, my dear ——, that you should employ your time well. I suppose that you are now at school; but, wherever you are, I cannot but be interested about you; and nothing will give me greater pleasure in my remote residence, than to hear of your being distinguished by every quality and attainment which are requisite to constitute the great and good man. You have, certainly, sufficient abilities, and you are blest, I think, with naturally good dispositions; but remember, that both must be cultivated, or you will not arrive at excellence either as a man or a Christian. You used to say that I was always right; I am sure I am right in this." MS. notes.

[1] Bishop Middleton's MS. notes.

On Christmas Day, 1814, he delivered his first sermon in the cathedral at Calcutta, from Luke ii. 10, 11. "For behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," &c.; a happy choice of subject, enabling him to expatiate on salvation, of which he was appointed the distinguished messenger to the inhabitants of the East.

At this juncture the state of religion in India was deplorable. The sanguinary rites and debasing superstition of paganism were practised by the natives, whilst the means for their conversion to Christianity were comparatively small. A branch of the Syrian church, indeed, had for ages been settled on the coast of Malabar; members of the church of Rome extended their influence from Goa, and the Baptists had been introduced into Calcutta at the latter end of the last century. The Presbyterians also had their congregations, and missionaries of other sects were dispersed in various parts of the Indian continent. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge had not been inattentive to the benighted state of Hindostan, and had stationed missionaries at Tranquebar, Madras, Cuddalore, Tanjore, and Trichinopoly. But the English inhabitants were so ill supplied with clerical ministration, that many of them had no opportunity of hearing divine service.

The necessity of attending to the religious concerns of so large a part of the British dominions was apparent. The progress of improvement, however, could not be rapid, and the Bishop found many impediments in the way of projects, which suggested themselves, from time to time, to his compehensive mind.

On the first establishment of episcopacy in India, it was difficult for the government of England to define the powers of the bishop. The ground was to be tried; and as circumstances occurred, he found it necessary to seek direction, and authority to meet them, from the crown which had placed him in the see; consequently, the effect of his exertions could not be commensurate with the advantage he contemplated, for he had not the means of bringing it to a completion.

Still he was assiduous in his endeavours to ascertain the state of the mind in his extensive diocese, and lost no opportunity of affording an interview to those who sought a conference. Amongst these was a person from Bagdad, who brought an overture from an Arabian convert to Christianity, and a Persian letter, in which he furnished the Bishop with an argument against the Koran. This and other circumstances gave the Bishop an opinion that the mind was at work; and that a bishop who could stand forward as the patron of converts whose sincerity was approved, and who could bear the expense of printing, as occasion required, might be a powerful instrument in the hand of Providence to promote a work which, sooner or later, will be accomplished.

The Arabian expressed a wish that the Bishop would invite him to Bengal, that he might openly profess Christianity, having already been baptised, and might be enabled to obtain a subsistence equal to what he would relinquish. The Bishop knowing that further proof of sincerity was necessary before he put implicit confidence in a person of this description, and having no immediate prospect of a subsistence for him, declined giving a direct invitation; but replied to the Persian, that in case of his coming to Calcutta on other grounds he was ready to receive him.

In the January after his arrival the Bishop proceeded to appoint registrars in the three[1] archdeaconries, and to forward the instruments of institution to the archdeacons themselves. Having placed the proper officers in the ecclesiastical departments, other business demanded his attention. A letter from the archdeacon of Bombay represented to him the irregular mode of celebrating marriages in the out-stations. The Bishop observed, in reply, that the same irregularities prevailed, till of late years, in the presidency of Fort William, from the extreme paucity of clergy; and that even then marriage licenses were granted by the supreme court. In this,

[1] Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay.

and in many other instances, there was great need of reform. The marriage act did not extend to India; and neither the new charter of the Company, nor the letters patent appointing the Bishop, supplied the defect.

The baptising of infants was another point on which he was consulted, and he directed that parents should be admonished to carry them to church, where there was no reasonable plea to the contrary. He was at this time expecting a proclamation for a general thanksgiving for the peace, and was preparing a form of prayer, which was afterwards used, when he preached a [1] sermon on the occasion.

One of the first steps towards improvement in the distant part of the diocese, was the formation of a school society at Bombay, and the adoption of Bell's system; which gave the Bishop great satisfaction, not merely in the mode of teaching, but in the use of the catechism and liturgy of the church. On this account he desired to be a subscriber to the society.

His early attention was also directed to the education of children in the city of Calcutta. The system pursued in the free school was improved under his direction: he became its patron, and projected annual examinations; at which, in process of time, some of the public functionaries attended. His Lordship took part in these examinations, and distributed the prizes. This had its due effect upon the spectators, and, shortly after, a native waited upon him with a donation of five hundred rupees. He thus brought into order an [2] institution which, on his arrival, was seldom mentioned but to furnish an inviduous contrast to other establishments at Calcutta.

He was soon after requested by the Governor General to become the visitor of the orphan school, another seminary of "country-born," amounting to 700 children.

[1] See the body of this work.

[2] This school, in 1820, was increased from 300 to 400 children; consisting of 280 boys and 120 girls. When the Bishop entered on the see he found the school in a neglected state, but the monthly meetings of the patron and governors, and the introduction of a master from England, accomplished much for its welfare.

In every institution of a religious character he had to feel his way, that he might not excite the jealousy of those who already occupied the ground. A Bible society had been established before his arrival, and one of his first objects was the formation of a diocesan committee in conjunction with the society in London for promoting Christian Knowledge. It had been intimated to his Lordship, that such a society as this, embracing so many objects, would create alarm; but by a temperate conduct, and the circulation of a short account of the society, his wishes were at length accomplished: many of the leaders of the Bible society came into his views: he himself became the president, and the meetings were held at his house.

In the summer he began to exercise some of the functions peculiar to his order. Early in July he held a confirmation, for which the minds of the people had been prepared by a sermon, preached by Archdeacon Loring, at the Bishop's desire.

About this time the Bishop was involved in some perplexity by the claims which were set up by the respectable members of the church of Scotland resident at Calcutta, to a community of privilege with the church of England. To the Bishop's clear and comprehensive mind this equality of privileges to two churches in the same state appeared an anomaly from the ordinary principles of legislation, and even the mutual interests of the bodies concerned. He was well aware that the articles of Union secured the ascendancy of the kirk in Scotland, but he knew also that it conferred no pre-eminence in England; and that in London, for instance, the frequenters of the Caledonian chapel ranked as dissenters from the church as by law established. He naturally conceived that the case would be the same in Calcutta, or wherever a bishop of the established church was regularly appointed; and, therefore, although it seemed that some persons concerned in the management of Indian affairs took a different view of the subject, he felt that he could not

surrender these rights of the church which had been solemnly committed to his hands. He did not think that he was asserting any new claim, still less indulging any petty and unwarrantable spirit of bigotry; but with perfect charity to the persons of those whom he opposed, he still felt himself bound to contend, that in his deliberate judgment they were infringing the just rights of the venerable church to which we belong, and of whose principles he had been made the first depositary and guardian in the continent of India.

The conduct pursued by himself, and recommended by him to his archdeacons, was mild and benevolent. In all proceedings nothing was to be forced or carried on with ostentation. Whether with reference to the formation of district committees or schools, a quiet course was prescribed and adopted, and it had a beneficial effect. In every establishment proposed he attended to the minutiæ. The selection of the elementary books best adapted to the state of the different denominations of scholars, had an equal share in his attention with matters of an higher description. His correspondence with Archdeacon Barnes of Bombay evinces the great care and moderation of the Bishop, as well as the admirable conduct of the zealous and judicious head of that archdeaconry.

So prosperous were the proceedings of the diocesan committee at Calcutta, that the Bishop was enabled to send, in July 1815, 620*l.* to the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, two-thirds of which were to be returned in books and tracts. These were to supply the want of instruction in barracks, cantonments, hospitals, gaols, regimental and other schools, and to correct ignorance amongst Europeans, whenever it appeared.

He preferred the society at Bartlett's Buildings to all other societies in the extent of usefulness in India. "We give away Bibles," he said to a friend, "and so far are equal to any other which does the same; we give away prayer books, and tracts upon every religious subject, and are, therefore, superior. And this is found to be true in fact. The Colombo Bible

Society has been obliged to abandon its fundamental principle, which is acknowledged in a sermon sent from Ceylon: and the persons in that island who are most zealous to promote Christianity, have applied to Bartlett's Buildings for a supply of catechetical tracts, and have received them. There cannot be a stronger proof that the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge is better adapted than all others for India."

It has been already observed, that the powers of the Bishop were imperfectly defined in the letters patent; for although it would appear from their tenor that it was the purpose of the crown that the Bishop of Calcutta should have the fullest authority over the clergy of the united Church of England and Ireland in India, yet, there being no parochial clergy in that country, the Governor General in council demurred upon the point: and stated, that as the case then stood, all the clergy were held to be *military* chaplains; those attached to the church in Calcutta being under the control of the Governor General in council, and those in other quarters receiving their instructions immediately from the Commander in Chief. At the same time the Governor General in council addressed a letter to the Bishop, concurring in the anxiety which the Bishop expressed in a communication made to the Vice President on the 19th of June, 1815, for carrying into effect, at an early period, the objects contemplated by the legislature in providing an episcopal establishment for British India, and expressing a desire of affording every facility to his Lordship in the execution of that important duty. Accordingly, orders were issued for a proclamation, containing an extract from the letters patent, granted by His Royal Highness the Prince Regent on behalf of the King, dated 2d May, 1814, declaring that the general control over all chaplains of the united church of England and Ireland, attached to the presidencies in India, in spiritual matters, had been transferred to the Bishop, and that the clergy throughout the diocese of Calcutta were to take notice of and conform to it.

But the Governor-General, in the above-mentioned letter, further observed, that the Bishop's functions would still be confined to the superintendence over the moral conduct of the chaplains, and his authority would, consequently, be exercised only in the unpleasant part of its character; namely, in censure or inhibition, where misconduct might require it, whilst the pleasing duty of giving to persons deserving of distinction preferable stations would be withheld from him.

The Governor-General in council, therefore, with a view of freeing the episcopal functions from so invidious a check, and to remove the obvious objection which arises from a concurrent jurisdiction, resolved, that the nomination of chaplains to particular stations should hereafter originate with the Bishop, and he requested His Lordship to communicate to the local governments of the presidencies such arrangements as he might think proper to make, in order that the necessary instructions for the pay and allowances of the chaplains might be made in the usual manner.

At the same time an order was issued by the council that all clergymen appointed in future to the situation of chaplains in India should, on their arrival, report themselves to the Bishop, or, in his absence, to the archdeacon of the presidency at which they landed. The Bishop was also furnished with a complete compilation of the existing rules and orders for the guidance of the chaplains, for the purpose of enabling him to prepare such new regulations as he might deem expedient for the better management of the ecclesiastical establishment.[1]

But the Court of Directors were dissatisfied with that part of the regulations of the supreme government which empowered the Bishop to nominate the chaplains to their stations, and ordered it to be rescinded; so that, as matters now stood, the archdeacons had only to examine letters of orders,

[1] Letter of the Chief Secretary to the Bishop of Calcutta, 1st Nov. 1815.

to administer the oaths, &c. and to send to the Bishop an attested certificate from the register that every thing had been regularly done which fell under their cognizance.

The Court of Directors assented to the other regulations; but the appointment of chaplains, they averred, interfered with their patronage; and on that view their letter passed through the Board of Controul. They enjoined the governments to co-operate with the ecclesiastical authorities, but in no case to grant any allowances without special order.

The Bishop was attentive to the propriety of ecclesiastical proceedings as well as to the welfare of the church in other respects. Of this we have a proof in the following anecdote. A clergyman in one of the presidencies established a lecture; but did not deliver it in the church. In informing his superior of this circumstance, he alleged that he acted from the best motives, and from a regard to the welfare of the established church. For this the Bishop gave him credit; but added his regret that he had commenced it in a private house, as such a proceeding was quite irregular and liable to censure.

In December 1815, he held his primary visitation at Calcutta, which was attended by ten of the clergy, the rest being absent at the distance of many hundred miles from that city: and on the 18th of the same month, His Lordship, accompanied by his family, quitted Calcutta to make the primary visitation of his diocese; an undertaking not to be accomplished under 5000 miles. He was conveyed to Madras on board the Cecilia, and landed at that place on the 26th, under a salute of fifteen guns from the fort. The Admiral's house was prepared for his reception. On the Sunday after his arrival he preached at the new church dedicated to St. George, which he consecrated on the 8th of January, 1816; and on the day following held a confirmation consisting of 278 persons, including many adults. The church of St. George is a handsome structure, standing in the midst of a field of six acres, and surrounded by a

treble or quadruple row of palm trees, a splendid emblem of Christianity in the East.[1]

His visitation was attended by ten clergymen; more than had been seen together at Madras. On the Sunday following, he preached in two of the churches to almost the whole settlement. But his chief labour was in reducing into order the confusion in which he found ecclesiastical matters involved. The Armenians sent him a deputation of their body; and he was visited by a Brahmin[2], with a request that

[1] The churches in India, previous to the erection of the bishopric of Calcutta, had been consecrated under a commission from the Archbishop of Canterbury, without any endowment or previous donation of the church or church-yard. The Bishop was in doubt how to act on such occasions. In some places he required deeds of donation from the local government, in which the church and church-yard were conveyed to trustees, to be held in trust, as consecrated and set apart for ever. And in others, he was satisfied with the written consent of the government, the founders, that he should proceed to consecration. The rest of the ceremony was in conformity to the rules laid down in Burn's Ecclesiastical Law.

[2] See a letter dated at sea in the Bay of Bengal, 21st Dec. 1815, addressed to the Lord Bishop of St. David's, and published in the Annual Biography and Obituary for 1824. in which Bishop Middleton makes the following observations: — "The Brahmin is a man of great learning for an Asiatic, of great acuteness, and an anxious inquirer after the true faith. He has renounced idolatry, together with some hundreds of his dependants; and I am not without hope, that I may be destined by a gracious Providence to baptize them all into Christ's religion. What a day would that be for the Christian world! But there is yet much to be done; and, unfortunately, I have been obliged to leave him for six months, to go on my visitation. I pray that God may bless it to the ends for which it is undertaken." The bishop proceeds to state that the Brahmin had called upon him, to request that he would print the sermon which he had preached the day before; and on his declining it, the Brahmin prevailed on the Bishop to read it to him and to expound it, which was done. But beside verbal instruction, His Lordship assisted him with useful treatises on the elements of Christian knowledge, and gave him a copy of the "Easter Catechisms," which the Bishop of St. David's had published, and presented to Bishop Middleton. The Brahmin, according to his own expression, found it "most useful, a perfect guide, and a collection of those authorities for which he had been seeking." — "I have a peculiar pleasure," says the Bishop of Calcutta, "in mentioning this circumstance, because it must be highly gratifying to Your Lordship to know, that at least in one single, but memorable instance, your labours have been useful.

he would read to him and expound a sermon, which the Brahmin had been told that the Bishop had preached the day before.

Here he was present at a meeting of the district committee of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge. They were pursuing a good course, and confining themselves exclusively to European objects for the present, and gaining strength every day. There were already members of the society from Delhi to Cape Comorin; and the Bishop was gratified by finding that the subject was taken up by military characters, who were anxious to supply their poor soldiers with Prayer-books, &c., by which the donors would be benefited as much as those who received the gifts.

He passed the morning of the 26th January at the college at Madras, in a very interesting manner, at an examination of the natives in Hindu law of descent and inheritance, carried on in Sanscrit recitation, or rather singing of verse in Persian, Tamul, and Teloogoo. When he reflected upon the scene he had witnessed, it struck him that very much was to be done, before we can subvert Hinduism.

From Madras, which he quitted on the 31st of January, the bishop proceeded on his visitation[1] by land; and his mode of travelling he represented as patriarchal. His party consisted of his whole establishment, attended by a military escort. After journeying fifteen or twenty miles, they pitched their tents before the sun was high. Their baggage was conveyed on camels, whilst the Bishop and his family, according to the custom of the country, were conveyed in palanquins. On the following morning he reached the Seven Pagodas, and entered through a Palmyra tope, amidst the singing of birds, into that vast assemblage of mis-shapen

Indeed, I do not know of any elementary book so well suited to those who are dissatisfied with idolatry, of which we have here many thousands, and who are almost persuaded to become Christians," &c.

[1] The account here given of the Bishop's travels is grounded on the authority of a MS. sent to the writer of these memoirs by Mrs. Middleton.

masses of rock and ancient sculpture. These, and indeed every other object of interest which came in his way, he examined with the eye of an antiquary and philosopher. As the Sunday recurred, he constantly took part in the performance of divine service. The Syriac and Persian languages occupied part of his attention; and thus he relieved his mind from the labour of his journey. Passing near Alumbura and by Conjameer, he arrived at Pondicherry on the 7th. Here he saw the Jesuits' college and Capuchins' church. In the library of the former, he found the books in bad condition, but some of them on very good subjects. The Christians of the Romish church sent him a deputation, who appeared respectable men, some of whom presented books to him.

He quitted Pondicherry on the 9th of February, and reached Cuddalore on the same day. There he visited Mr. Holzberg, the discharged missionary, who gave him an account of the low state of the mission, and to whom he afterwards sent a present of money, to be divided between the poor of his congregation and himself. Whilst he was sitting in his tent in the evening, he observed two or three persons who were beating a tom-tom, and playing a pipe, and behind them two others leading a sheep, exactly as sacrifices are represented in ancient sculpture; and such it was. Some of the Bishop's party watched the procession to a neighbouring temple, whence the animal was brought back after being slain.

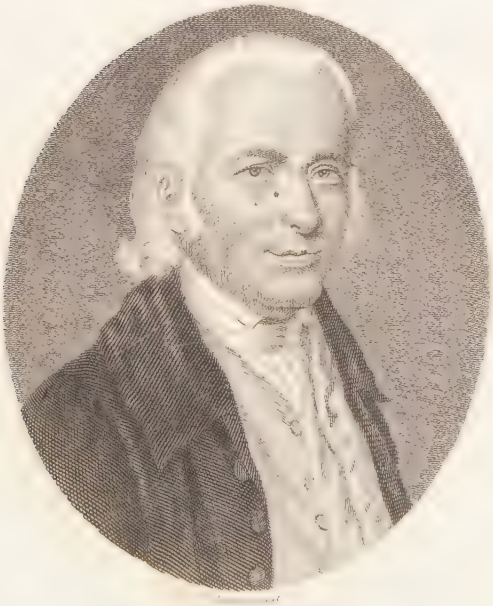
On the 10th, he moved from Pondicherry to Periahcoopum, and on the 12th reached the great pagodas at Chillumbarum. The latter part of the road was interesting, leading by the side of a river, with the gateways of the pagodas in the distance. These he visited in the evening, when the Brahmins were assembled to receive him, who were very ready to show every part of these edifices of eastern superstition. There were at least five hundred persons present, chiefly Brahmins, who pressed forward to observe him.

when Jupiter enters Leo, the Hindus from all parts of India come to bathe. Seven hundred thousand have been known to be assembled on the occasion. They believe that the Ganges secretly communicates with the Tank. It is surrounded with buildings for resting places; and the whole of the village of Combacoonum, which is of vast extent, consists of tanks, pagodas, and ancient buildings. He stopped also to see a palace of the Rajah of Tanjore. The walls of the rooms were covered with mythological paintings, representing the marriage procession of Vishnu; and in the garden was a large bungalo, surrounded by a moat. When he reached the school, he found the little Christian congregation assembled, and also the children, who in a set speech addressed him, asking his protection. He heard several of them read the Psalms, and examined their writing. To each of the children he gave a double fanam, and made a present to the catechist and schoolmaster.

Thence he proceeded to Tanjore, and on the 22d received the Rajah's minister; and accompanied Mr. Kohloff to see the mission. They walked along the principal street of the Christian village, to the mission schools, the library, Schwartz's chapel, and the burying-ground, where he noticed Jacobi's grave.

The next day he went to visit the Rajah. A great concourse were near and in the fort. The Rajah descended from his throne, and received the Bishop at the steps of the durbar. He opened the conversation by expressing his happiness at seeing the head of our religion in his country, recollecting the great benefits he had received from Schwartz, whom he regarded as a father, and at the same time declared his high respect for Mr. Kohlhoff and the other missionaries who had resided at Tanjore. This gave the Bishop an opportunity of thanking His Highness, in the name of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, for the kindness and protection which he had shown to the missionaries. The Rajah assured him that the friendship of such men as the

HIS HIGHNESS SERBOJEE.



SCHWARTZ.

missionaries did him the highest honour; and he reverted to the character of Schwartz, reminding the Bishop, that although the Company had erected a monument to the memory of that excellent person at Madras, yet he had been the first to show him respect, by sending to England for the monument, which is now in the fort-church at Tanjore. His Lordship replied, that the English were deeply sensible of Mr. Schwartz's merits: but that posterity in recounting them would not fail to mention, that they were such as to have called forth so extraordinary a mark of regard from a native Prince.

The Rajah afterwards assured an English officer, that since he sat on the throne he had not received greater satisfaction than from this visit: and that, although the Bishop's residence at Tanjore would be short, he intended to keep up a correspondence with him. The conversation being ended, he showed the Bishop and his attendants the interior of his palace, and his library, which contained many books and pictures. Among these were portraits of the missionaries, from which he selected a portrait of Schwartz and presented it to His Lordship.

The library contained many good books, of which several were English, on the subject of anatomy. There were also some family-pictures by native artists, and an ivory skeleton, which takes to pieces, and which the Rajah appeared thoroughly to understand. After examining the contents of the library, the Rajah led the Bishop to a statue of His Highness, placed on a large slab, which had been there from time immemorial, and was used as the pedestal of the throne of the Gentoo dynasty, whom his Mahratta ancestors displaced.

On the 24th of February, the Rajah returned the Bishop's visit with unusual state. The procession was grand and impressive. Six or eight elephants, two of them of enormous size, especially the state elephant, outriders, cavalry, infantry, and a band of musicians, preceded the Rajah and his son, who were mounted on English horses, superbly caparisoned, and attended by his minister and several nobles of the court: the

whole concourse amounting to between two and three thousand.

Colonel Blackburn and the Bishop received His Highness as he dismounted; and, after the custom of the country, led him to the sofa, sitting down on his left hand. They conversed on various subjects. Speaking of English history, the Rajah called it "the Generations of the Kings of England;" which is the oriental form of expression, and exactly the Hebrew Tolidoth. The Mahratta history he acknowledged to be very defective in dates; and that the people of Hindustan talked of "many thousands of years," &c. whilst our historians always gave the precise time.

In the evening, the Bishop visited the church in the fort, and saw the monument erected by the Rajah's order to the memory of Schwartz. A remarkable anecdote[1] of that excellent man was mentioned. When he was on his death-bed, and supposed to be dead, and his feet were cold, Gerickè sung over him a stanza of a funeral hymn, which he was fond of while in health; Schwartz appeared to pay no attention to it, but went on with the second stanza, clearly and articulately, and then was heard no more. Mr. Kohlhoff presented to the Bishop the Hebrew Psalter which Schwartz always carried in his pocket when he travelled; a memorial which was justly estimated.

From Tanjore the Bishop reached the Ariseut on the 27th, where he was met by two gentlemen from Trichinopoly, who had pitched their tents to receive and entertain him. He arrived at Trichinopoly on the following day, and, having transacted some ecclesiastical affairs, visited Mr. Pohle and his mission. He found the venerable man, his congregation, and his school assembled in the church to receive him. During the two succeeding days a church and two burying grounds were consecrated, and one hundred and five persons, many of whom were officers and soldiers, were confirmed by

[1] This anecdote is mentioned in "Diary of a Tour through Southern India, &c., by a Field Officer of Cavalry," p. 59.

the Bishop. The planning of a church-library for Trichinopoly was another point which occupied his attention. His assistance in the pulpit was afforded here as at other places; on the 3d March he preached twice, and afterwards had a long conference with Mr. Pohle and Mr. Kohlhoff on matters connected with the mission; particularly with the latter, on a subject which he had mentioned at Tanjore; namely, a school for the education of the children of the Society's missionaries. The Bishop suggested the propriety of admitting native children, and making it a seminary for Christian teachers; thus providing for the instruction of the people, as the country shall become Christian. Mr. Kohlhoff earnestly requested him to keep this project in mind, and assured His Lordship that all the children of the Society's missionaries would readily embrace the tenets of the church of England.

On the 4th the Bishop ascended the rock; and his attention was arrested by the sound of native music, performed by persons in a procession with the morning offerings of fruit, &c. to the Swamy in the neighbouring pagoda. Descending, he passed the mosque belonging to Wallajah's palace; but saw only the exterior, the attendant Mussulman requiring the party to take off their shoes, which could not be complied with. Afterwards they proceeded to the pagodas at Seringham: they are situated on an island, which is twelve miles in extent, and are thirty-six in number. The Bishop and his attendants entered the principal gate of the great pagoda, and observed the enormous door-posts of single stones. The Brahmins displayed all the trapping and jewels of the Swamy, which appeared to be of great value. But that which most attracted attention, was the choultry, with its thousand pillars.

On the eve of the Bishop's departure, Mr. Kohlhoff brought him a message, full of respect and regard, from Mr. Pohle, who "expected not to see him again in this world;" and pronounced upon him a blessing. The Bishop (according to his own expression) could not but feel, considering Mr.

Kohlhoff's character, "that the less was blessed of the greater."

From Trichinopoly the Bishop pursued his journey by Nagamungulam to Veeramally, in Tondiman's country, and encamped opposite to a pagoda on a rock, the most beautiful object he had seen in his progress. Here he received some of Tondiman's people. They brought him a plentiful supply of fruit, with a respectful message from their master; who had orders from the governor to take care that every thing should be prepared for the Bishop's passage through his dominions. Thence he removed on the 7th, and pitched his tents in a jungle surrounded by woody and rocky mountains. Here the Zemindar, formerly the Polygar of Tourancourchy, a neighbouring village, came to pay his respects, and brought the accustomed present. He was a young man of about twenty-two years of age, and had under him seventy villages, all of which he represented as poor and ruined.

The Bishop pursued his course to Perambutty, where he was joined by David, a Christian schoolmaster of Tanjore, who came to be his amanuensis. He reached Toombaputty on the 9th, and visited the adjoining village. The houses consisted of cones of thatch upon cylinders of mud, the usual form in that part of the country. Here he received letters from Tanjore, and a present from the Rajah of His Highness's picture. Through Vellahputty he went to Madura, and saw Timul Naik's choultry, and the remains of the palace, the pagodas, the court-house, and the choultry, ornamented with paintings, of about fifty years' date, representing the arrival of the English. Passing the great rock of Secundermally, Terramungalum, Verdupettah, and Weypulpettah, he came on the 17th to the banks of the Sartoor, and pursuing his journey by Coilpettah to Cayetoor Fort, he passed through a country abounding in Asiatic objects, which, like those already described, attracted his attention.

On the 21st March he arrived at Said Khan's choultry, where three different parties of people waited on him. The

first was merely the daroga with a present: the next were Brahmins, complaining of the loss of their pagoda lands, and danger of starvation: and the third, a body of Christians, headed by their native priest, under Mr. Kohlhoff, who presented themselves to ask his blessing and protection. The Bishop exhorted them to persevere in the right way, and to bless God, who had called them to a knowledge of his truth, amidst surrounding darkness. They had with them their Malabar psalters: and sung part of a psalm to a well known tune, in excellent time and melody. It was an affecting scene; and the Brahmins, who were in the field, saw all that passed.

On the 22d the Bishop reached Palamcottah, where he visited the school, consisting of forty-one children, and the mission-church, built chiefly at the expense of a Brahmin lady, who was converted by Schwartz. The native priest, or the catechist, performed the service in Malabar every Sunday morning, and the military officer read the service in English, and a sermon to the families of the settlement. The children of the school practised the Madras system with more original simplicity than His Lordship had ever observed. In the course of his visit, he took an opportunity of recommending to the head of the district the native Christians, who are very numerous in that part. It seemed to be the opinion that they would do well for writers in offices.

After having halted at Nagancheery, he proceeded by Poonamgoodie, near the foot of the False Cape Comorin, a magnificent mountain, but not the last of the Ghauts, and reached Arambooly-Pass on the 27th; and found his camp erected at the bottom of a basin, inclosed by stupendous rocky mountains. The spot was the bed of a tank, then dry. Part of his time here was occupied in reading papers respecting the Romish and Syrian Christians in Travancore, and in receiving a deputation of Christians, lately under the charge of Mr. Kingelturbe, missionary from the London Society. Mr. Everett was at the head of the party. They were in

number about eight hundred, and seemed much inferior in manner and appearance to the native Christians of Tanjore. After them came a crowd of natives, being the principal men of twelve villages. This interview ended, he went to see the Lines, (or rather ruins of them,) a stupendous work. The pass is not two miles wide. The works had been very strong, and were defended by an impenetrable jungle and double ditch. In 1809 they were manned by 30,000 military, and attacked by 4000, all sepoys, who succeeded merely by sending about twelve men to the summit of the rock to the eastward. They sounded a trumpet, and were supposed to be part of a large force ready to pour down on the rear of the besieged, who thereupon took flight. Before this invasion, Travancore [proper] had never been the scene of warfare in the memory of any man living.

By Ordagherry, Nagracoil, Cutchaizy, and Nyaltengherry, through a country abounding in magnificent features, he arrived at Trevandram. Thence, on the 3d of April, he proceeded to Calicootum, Attengherry, and Shatenoor, and encamped in view of the sea; where the Christians and native judges came to pay their respects to him. Whilst he remained in this part of the country, he visited one of the Syrian villages, distant about a mile and a half. He found the houses neat and well built. The Christian judge, who went with him, pointed out one inhabited by the grand-daughter of the person who built the church about fifty years before. In front of the edifice, in the church-yard, stands a lofty cross, to which is an ascent of steps. Before the Bishop arrived at it, the kashusha, attended by several persons, came out to meet him, and showed him the church. Lights were burning at the altar. His Lordship expressed a desire to see their Syriac books, with which they complied. They were all liturgical; and one contained the office of the mass. Another, which they had possessed about eighty years, was brought from Antioch. The church had a crucifix, and two small altars with crosses, and an *Ecce Homo* in tapestry; and a large part

of the wall was covered with inscriptions in Malabar, said to be an account of all the saints, with the dates of their deaths. The Bishop enquired whether any service was performed at the cross in the churchyard, and was answered that the office was said there on Good Friday; and that there were processions to it on other occasions. They were anxious to know the cause of the Bishop's visit. Upon hearing who he was, that he was the friend of all the Christians in India, and wished to serve them, their apprehensions vanished, and they commended themselves to his protection.

On the 6th of April, the Bishop and his attendants arrived at Quilon, and were kindly received by the commanding officer; from whom he learnt, that Joseph Rambar was then the Syrian bishop; that Mar Thomas, who underwent a sort of mock consecration from the dying Mar Dionysius, had died about two months before; and that Joseph had been consecrated by a former and legitimate bishop, some years previous to that event. He also learnt, that the Christians who are not in connexion with the church of Rome are called the new or separate Christians; and that all of them have, in a greater or less degree, been forced into that communion at different times; which will account for the mixture of Romish rites in their religious services. It was reported, that they had been supplied with books from Antioch within the last fifty years, and would be willing to give Bishop Middleton any thing they possessed; that no person but their bishop had the whole of the Syriac Scriptures; and that the "Gospel of the Infancy" (or St. Thomas's) was still among them. Whilst the Bishop was at Quilon he visited the school of the 80th regiment, and found that it was not conducted on the Madras system, which it much wanted. Afterwards he received a visit from the ecclesiastical governor of the archbishopric of Cranganore, a decrepid old man, said to be of excellent character, who professed great readiness to show the bishop whatever the library contained at Cranganore, and the college belonging to it. The ecclesiastical governor told Bishop

Middleton that he had come to Quilon to answer a complaint made by the Propagandists at Verapoli, that he received under his protection churches which properly belong to the Propagandists, and which have revolted. He stated, that all the power which the Verapoli people possess had been acquired by intrigue and encroachment, and that the seceding churches had been cruelly treated. Next came the vicar-general and Father Prospero from Verapoli. After some conversation on the press belonging to the Propaganda at Rome, and the many works which had issued from it, the Bishop adverted to the difference that had taken place between them and the church of Cranganore, which they excused, laying the blame on the latter. The Bishop, before his departure from this place, requested that measures might be taken for the attendance of all the soldiers at divine service every Sunday; and the commanding officer promised that it should be done. His Lordship observed, with regret, that the poor Syrian fishermen had had zeal enough to build themselves a church, whilst the English were obliged to perform service in the public rooms for want of a sacred edifice.

Quitting Quilon in a boat, he reached Aleppie on the 10th, and the next day arrived at Balghatty, the residency, opposite Cochin, where he was received by the judge: and in the evening went over to the town. Here he found some of the principal edifices neglected; the Dutch church was shut up for want of a clergyman, and the school in the fort destroyed. In short, it appeared that neither religion nor education excited the public interest. He had much conversation with a gentleman who was to be the interpreter between the Syrian bishop and himself, and who gave him an account of the population, of European origin, then at Cochin. It was estimated at a thousand, one third of which were Protestant: the presence of an English clergyman would reclaim many, who joined other denominations of Christians from necessity: the children were not baptzied, and the sick could not receive the sacrament; for they had been without a Dutch minister

fifteen years. The town was taken by the English in 1795, but the fort was not demolished till 1803, when it was discovered that by the treaty of Amiens, it was to be given up to the French. The Dutch church escaped demolition by the interference of the judge. The pure Syrians were represented as not very pure. At Tripoontorah near this place, the pure and Romish Syrians had their separate services in the same church. Just as the interpreter was taking leave, the arrival of the metropolitan on the other side of the water was announced; and the following morning was fixed upon for the interview between the two bishops. In the evening Bishop Middleton went to the Jew Town, a remarkable place. The houses were neat, and the streets narrow, but well illuminated, it being the time of their passover. He saw some part of the service both of the white and black Jews; and afterwards had the opportunity of looking at their books, kept in a closet at the end of the synagogue: the boxes were adorned with crowns of gold, and jewels hanging from them. They had been presents from different rajahs and other persons. He was shown into the house of one of the rich inhabitants, where he saw the paschal supper set out, and covered with a cloth bearing an inscription from Exodus xii. 42. "It is a night," &c. in Hebrew.

At ten o'clock on the following morning, the Syrian bishop visited him, attended by several of his clergy, bringing a small number of Syrian books. He spoke of the desolate state of his churches, and requested the Bishop's favour towards them. At the same time he produced a copy of Schaasi Syrian Testament, and said that it was the one used in all his churches. Bishop Middleton mentioned the Philoxenian version, (of which the Syrian seemed to know nothing,) and presented to him the four volumes of White's edition, which he had brought for the purpose. Directing his attention to the Lord's prayer, Mar[1] Dionysius found that it agreed very

[1] Mar is the Syrian title for bishop.

closely with the other version. A Syriac inscription, written by Bishop Middleton was then produced, to be inscribed in the book, purporting that it was presented to Mar Dionysius, by Mar Thomas the first bishop of Calcutta, at his primary visitation at Cochin. [1] The liturgy of the Syrian church was the next subject of conversation; and a volume was opened containing a portion of that used in the Syro-Romish church; but, as stated by Mar Dionysius, not used in his congregation. Bishop Middleton concluded that it must have once been so used, or it would not have been found in the same book. The Syrian promised a complete transcript of the ritual of his church, and also a copy of "the Gospel of the Infancy." About the latter there was some hesitation, until the bishop assured him that he knew it was not used by his church, and had been sent thither by the Manichees. In his account of the ritual [2], he stated that there are in it both Nestorian and Jacobite prayers; the latter of which are in use with him. He acknowledged the seven sacraments, and remarked that children were usually baptized on the eighth day. The attire of Mar Dionysius was very handsome, being formed of crimson satin, with a green velvet mantle over the shoulders; a crimson mitre ornamented with gold was on his head, and a crosier was borne by one of his attendants, whilst another carried a cross of jewels.

On the 15th of April, when he was preparing to leave Cochin, Napthali Rottenberg, the Jew, called upon him with a copy of the Jewish Plates; and the Bishop had much conversation with him. He said that they had an account of their arrival in that country after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; but that it was lent to Dr. Buchanan, who carried it away with him. They had still among them Maimonides and several books, of which he promised the Bishop a list, in order that he might select such as he might wish to purchase.

[1] The book is now deposited in the Syrian bishop's library.
[2] He called his liturgy, Liturgia Apostolorum.

Before the Bishop left Cochin, Archdeacon Loring[1] administered the sacrament to forty persons, and received information, from which he learnt that it had not been administered at that place for twenty years.

On the same day in the evening the party set sail, and on the 16th and 17th proceeded slowly along the coast with light and unfavourable breezes, and on the 21st Archdeacon Loring went on shore, on his return to Calcutta by way of Madras.

The Bishop reached Cannanore on the day following, and landed, in order to license the church; where he was attended by many of the principal inhabitants, who showed him great respect. From this time till his arrival at Bombay he did not leave the vessel[2], which anchored in that harbour on the 14th of May. The archdeacon and clergy with the governor's aid-de-camp came on board to welcome him; and he landed in the evening under a salute, General Cooke, Colonel Griffith and other gentlemen meeting him at the pier-head. Hence he was conducted to the government-house, where Sir Evan Nepean, (the governor,) Sir Miles Nightingale, (commander-in-chief,) and the members of the council were assembled to receive him.

On the 20th he had an interview with the Armenian bishop. They had much conversation respecting the Armenian church and literature. The Armenian bishop represented the history of his establishment as beginning in the middle of the fourth century, since which time his church has not undergone any change. The language of the Armenian version is perfectly intelligible to scholars, but is slightly different from the common idiom. He spoke of many books still in manuscript in their language, consisting of history, lives of saints, and even poetry.

Here the Bishop held a visitation and confirmation, and

[1] Archdeacon Loring accompanied the bishop on his visitation.

[2] In the voyage to Bombay he made himself well acquainted with the Syriac, and read a portion of the new testament in that language every day.

consecrated the church.[1] It had been built one hundred years; but had not been consecrated, though application had been made at its foundation to Dr. Robinson, Bishop of London, for the purpose: as appears from Cobbe's account of the church, &c. at Bombay. The reply was, that it required the Bishop's presence, and therefore could not be done. The chaplain was directed to open it at once.

During Bishop Middleton's visit, which continued through the whole monsoon, the clergy dined with him every alternate Thursday; and he lived with them on the most friendly terms. He preached thirteen times to attentive and numerous congregations: and his incessant attention to his episcopal duties, as well as hospitality, seemed to produce the effect of attaching the people to their prelate; which was manifested by the great respect that was paid him by the whole settlement.[2]

The rain was now almost incessant, so that with the exception of a visit to Elephanta, before the monsoon, and another to Tannah at the close of his visitation, he saw nothing of the adjacent country. His excursion to the latter place, in the island of Salsette, was made in the beginning of September, where he was received into the judge's house, in the capital of the island; and there met, amongst other persons, with Mr. Sharpe, who had resided in Persia, whither he was on the point of returning, as surgeon to the residency at Bushire. He offered his services in that country to the

[1] It was consecrated 7th July 1816, and dedicated to St. Thomas.

[2] Soon after the bishop's arrival, he had a visit from Moulla Ferose the learned Parsee. The conversation turned principally upon the ancient language of Persia; and it appeared plainly to the bishop, that the Pehlevi was nearly allied to Hebrew and Chaldee. The Moulla was very learned in Pehlevi, and being asked the names of many things, he gave words, of which the bishop could generally have guessed the meaning from that resemblance. The Zand appeared to be totally different, and to be rather of the Sanscrit class of languages; but many traces of both of these are found in the present Persian, which indeed is for the most part a compound of the two. MS. note.

Bishop, who gave him a commission to procure for him Syriac Manuscripts of the Horreum Mysteriorum of Greg. Bar Hebræus, and the Liber Apum of Solomon Bishop of Bussora. Mr. Sharpe thought it not unlikely that he might procure them from the convent of Echmiatzin, near Mount Ararat, where he had seen a large quantity of manuscripts on various subjects.

Having spent his time at Bombay with benefit to the Christians under his charge and satisfaction to himself, he went on board on the 17th of September, including in his party Archdeacon Barnes, whom he had invited to accompany him to Calcutta. The vessel touched at Goa, where he was honourably received by the governor, and conducted to the convents, the cathedral, and other places of interest to persons on their travels. He had expected to find some books of value in the libraries, but was disappointed. The city, however, was not without objects worthy of attention. From the Viceroy he received information respecting Old Goa. It once contained 300,000 inhabitants, but is now deserted, except by the different orders of the religious; and had been depopulated partly by the climate, and partly by the inquisition, now happily abolished.

On the 23d, the Bishop, Mrs. Middleton, and the attendants re-embarked, and landed at Cannanore on the 30th, where he inspected the school, and held a confirmation. The persons who received that rite on the present occasion, added to those who were confirmed at other places in the visitation, amounted to one thousand. After having made an excursion to the house of Mr. Wilson at Dermapatam, he proceeded to pay a second visit to Cochin, in order to have another interview with the Syrian Christians.

He landed at that place on the 4th October, and the next day went to the synagogue of the white Jews. He found, that according to their chronology, that was the year of the world 5577, and the 13th of the first month. The Exodus was A. M. 3129. The white Jews had been removed to this

place from Cranganore 303 years, at the time when the Bishop saw them. They follow the customs of the Portuguese Jews, but have their books from Amsterdam. They say that they are from the kingdom of Judah, and that they left the Holy Land after the desolation of Jerusalem by Titus. The Bishop received a promise from them of a present, containing a Jewish ritual, their service for the fast of the desolation of Jerusalem, and an almanack. In the evening, he obtained information of the manner in which the transcription of the Syriac ritual was proceeding, and learnt that the transcribers (Syrian *catenares*[1]) had been retarded by a permission given to the priests to marry. This proceeding originated with the Resident, who had offered a premium to those who should abandon celibacy. The Syrians, considering celibacy as essential to the clerical character, hesitated to give their daughters in marriage to the catenares; but their scruples were gradually giving way.

At the close of the following day, the Bishop, walking by the water side, came to a small oratory[2], in which a solitary worshipper was engaged in his devotions, and seemed to pay little attention to him or his companions, till he had finished. The oratory was made of wood with a *cajan* roof, about ten feet by six, with a large crucifix at the further end, said

[1] The title of the Syrian priests.

[2] This account will readily bring to the memory of the reader the passage of Scripture, Acts xvi. 13., wherein is related, that "on the Sabbath the converts to Christianity went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made." The word προσευχη here translated "prayer" has been differently rendered by some commentators, and taken to signify "the place of prayer;" and Schleusner has given the preference to this mode of interpretation. Sic legitur in N. T. Acts xvi. 13., Ἐξήλθομεν ἔξω τῆς πόλεως παρὰ ποταμὸν οὗ ἐνομίζετο προσευχὴ εἶναι: egressi sumus ex urbe ad fluvium, ubi ex antiquo instituto proseucha erat. A learned friend, to whom these memoirs were shown in manuscript, speaking of the resemblance between the Indian proseucha and that recorded in scripture, observed, that the Jews were wont to seek retired places for devotion, out of the walls of a city, to avoid the notice of the heathens; and they chose them near a river, probably for the sake of performing ablutions.

to have been brought from Verapoli, constructed by this old man, with the assistance of some others, for the purposes of daily devotion. There were three small lights burning upon an iron-rod dependent from the roof. The devotee told the Bishop he was sixty years of age, and on Sundays went to church.

On the same evening the priest of the white Jews called, and presented the two books which the Bishop wanted. A conversation took place on the subject of the black Jews, and particularly, whether they had any language, or the remains of any preserved in single words, unintelligible to the white Jews, or Malabars; he thought they had, and the interpreter, who was present, was of the same opinion. In the meantime the black Jews came in, with some of their books. His Lordship tried them upon this question for some time; but they persevered in maintaining that they called every thing by the same name as others did, and that as to any language which the interpreter did not understand, it was only Hebrew. He then asked the names of many things, and their replies accorded with the Hebrew of scripture. They profess to have been in India longer than the white Jews, though, in their attempt to prove this, they made themselves only of the same supposed standing in that country. Their statements were much confused; and they affirmed that all that was known of them, is contained in a record of 200 pages; of which there is no copy. It probably embraces nothing that has not been repeatedly examined. The Bishop purchased of them a small Hebrew MS. containing a portion of the Pentateuch. These Jews, though called black, are as fair as the Malabars, and, perhaps, as fair as the Abyssinians. Enquiry was made, if they knew any thing of the Falashes[1], but they had never heard of such a people.

On the 7th the Bishop proceeded to Tripoontera. The church at this place is sixty feet by twenty; and was built by

[1] See Bruce's Travels.

the Romish and Old Syrians conjointly, the nave by the former, and the chancel by the latter. The chancel in these churches seems always to be vaulted and semicircular in its eastern termination. The ceiling of this part is in small square compartments, which are in some instances coloured; and the roof of the nave is pointed, and generally covered with *cajan*. The Christians are in number about 800, consisting of Romish and Syrian; but the former are the most numerous. There is one small school for Malayalim, taught by a person of the Romish church.

The Bishop next went to Curringacherra, and afterwards to Burnloe, belonging to the Rajah of Cochin, where he dined. In the evening the *catenares*, who had been directed to attend, came in, and were joined by four laymen. The conversation lasted for two hours and a half; and to questions which the Bishop had prepared, they gave answers which were recorded.

On the 8th, he continued his excursion to Moluntoorty or Molundurtè, so often mentioned by La Croze; and then to Condernaad (Condanada), where he received the present of an old book of hymns, said to have been brought from Antioch. They requested the Bishop to give them a book in return, and wished him to build them a cross, which of course he declined. Thence he visited the celebrated Oadiampoor (Diamper), which is entirely Romish, and returned to Balghatty by water.

On the 9th of October, George, the *catenare*, whom the Syrian metropolitan had directed to attend him during his visit, gave the Bishop further information respecting his church, and impressed his Lordship very favourably with his knowledge of such matters, considering the disadvantage of his education. When he had retired, the Romish *malpan* came to pay him a visit. He was at the head of a seminary at Calipuam, near Cranganore, and brought with him two vicars, one from Oadiampoor. He promised the Bishop two Syriac grammars, which he afterwards sent, and desired in

return a copy of the new Syriac gospels, which he had lately seen, and wished to possess.

On the next day he left Balghatty in order to visit Augamallee, and despatched a messenger to order the service at eight o'clock at Aganarumba. Their canonical hours are from six in the morning to twelve o'clock. The church at this place suffered from Tippoo's invasion in 1791. The Bishop reached Aganarumba in time for the service, and was received with the music of the country, and a great concourse of people. The service being ended, he went to the *catenare*'s house adjoining the church, and found him to be a man of some learning, who possessed several MSS., with which he was not disposed to part. He was disappointed in his expectation of what he should meet with at Augamallee, and returned again to Balghatty.

From Balghatty he proceeded, on the 14th of October, to Coteaum to visit the metropolitan, and landed amidst a multitude of *catenares* and went to the seminary, where the Syrian bishop received and conducted him up a narrow staircase into a room, in which, notwithstanding the crowd of persons assembled, he held a conversation for two hours. He afterwards went over the seminary, saw the other bishop from Chawgaut (Mar Philoxenos) and then proceeded to the church, which is a large and good building. Here George presented to him a Syrian MS. containing hymns, psalms, and a treatise on the Trinity, in return for a palanquin which his Lordship had given him.

The Bishop and his party slept that night in a boat, and the next day reached Aleppie, where he met Mr. Norten, a church missionary, who had been educated, with some others, by Mr. Scott. He appeared to be invested with extraordinary powers in regard to the Syrians, and told his Lordship that he had issued an order or notice to the laity to pay their dues more regularly to the *catenares*, which had been attended to; and that the metropolitan had given him leave to preach to the Syrian churches, as soon as he should have made some

progress in Malayalim. It was the opinion of the Bishop that he ought to proceed with the utmost caution, for it appeared easy to divide the Syrians, and then the result might be very different from what was expected.

This gentleman and Mr. Walcot, whose business, as a deputy conservator of the forests, led him very much into the hills, gave several interesting particulars of the country; and stated, that the mountaineers are a wild race, whom it is difficult to approach, as they avoid all intercourse with Europeans, and hide themselves. Their mode of dealing is by barter; laying what they wish to dispose of in a well-known spot, and taking away what is left in lieu of it. The sagacity of the elephants is very conspicuous. Mr. Walcot had seen them feeling their way with the branch of a tree in their trunks, to prevent their falling into pits. The bigotry of the Brahmins in this part of Malabar surpassed any the Bishop had heard of. Near some of their temples they have a path for themselves, and another for the Coolies, &c. A traveller being overtaken by a storm had sought shelter in a pagoda where a quantity of rice was deposited. His presence was said to have made this unclean and useless, and he was required to pay for it, but refused.

On the 16th the Bishop and his companions went on board the Aurora, and sailed for Colombo, which they reached without any remarkable occurrence during the passage. He landed on the 21st of October, and was received by the governor, Sir Robert Brownrigg, and his staff on the pier, under a salute of seventeen guns, and proceeded in palanquins to the king's house.

On the following morning, having gone with the governor round the cinnamon garden, he received the civil and military gentlemen of the settlement, and afterwards conversed with Mr. Armor, Mr. Christian David, and Mr. Pereira, all of them Protestant teachers, much patronised by the governor and clergy.

The attention of the governor was unremitting, both in

exhibiting whatever curiosities were in his collection, and in introducing to him the characters most worthy of notice: among others, George Naderis de Silva, the converted Bhuddist priest, a man of uncommonly intelligent appearance. He read to the Bishop a portion of a Cingalese and also of an English book, in which he had made some progress. From his way of reckoning, the Bhuddish era seemed to date from about 500 years before the Christian, which will make Bhoud contemporary with Pythagoras, according to the received opinion.

As soon as this interesting character had left him, he had a visit from all the principal natives. One of them had a son in England, who was educating at the university, and was to go out as a clergyman. After these came Theophilus, a Mahometan convert: Petrus Panditty, and one or two others. The Bishop particularly explained to Theophilus that the Koran, though Mahomet professed to come with a revelation from God, tells us nothing new, except what respects Mahomet himself; a strong presumption that he had no divine commission. The interpreter made him perfectly acquainted with this argument, from which he seemed to derive much pleasure.

During his visit the Bishop went with the governor and his party to see the Bhuddist temple at Callangcabash, seven miles from Colombo. The way was by land, till they came within a mile of the temple, when boats were ready to receive them, and they proceeded up the Callany. The temple is a building of no striking appearance, resembling a house. The priests received them, dressed in yellow gowns, having the right arm and shoulder bare, as is seen in the figure of Bhud. The image was fixed against the wall in a small room, having a table before him with flowers upon it. On the head is something like a flame issuing, which the priests call a head leaf: the face is round and unmeaning, but intended to express abstraction. This figure was said to have been made 400 years, and the temple to be very much older. In

an adjoining room is another figure of this idol, in a similar position, sitting cross-legged, but with a face rather expressing sloth and voluptuousness. At the back of the temple is the daguba, a large building, said to contain parts of Bhud; some in the top, some in the middle, &c. In the front of the temple is a room, where the priests read the Bana; that is, preach; and near it are some old stones, on which are engraved grants of land, &c. One of these inscriptions was sung by the priest, and the Bishop afterwards saw a translation of it. On one of the external walls a curious legend was painted, of which his Lordship afterwards received an account.

He visited the Wesleyan mission. They were printing our Lord's discourses, the miracles, &c. in Cingalese. The Malabar school, founded and supported by Lady Brownrigg, and the seminary for Cingalese, also attracted his attention; and he called at the house of George Naderis, who showed him some of his Birman curiosities, particularly a zodiac on silk, drawn by the Birman king.

On the 29th his party attended on him to Mount Lavinia, the governor's country house. About a mile short of it is a large Christian village of Galkrese, where the governor at that time was building a church. On the day following, having visited the military and orphan schools, he dined with the governor, and after many expressions of esteem and regard, took leave of him at the pier, and embarked.

This visit to Ceylon the Bishop declared was one of the most gratifying circumstances of his life. He found it an island highly gifted by Providence, and wholly possessed by the British crown, rapidly advancing to civilisation and Christianity under the fostering care of a governor, who appeared to have no other wish or principle of action but the temporal and eternal happiness of the people committed to his rule. Here persons talked of diffusing knowledge and religion with as little reserve as they do in England. Schools were established, churches were built, books were disseminated,

and converts made, and all without a syllable being uttered about alarming the natives. Two or three such governors in succession would Christianise a great part of the island. The people seemed to be of a different character from those on the continent, in having more of confidence and cheerfulness, arising, probably, from a better acquaintance with Europeans. The Bishop particularly observed, in going to Mount Lavinia, that the people at their doors, instead of gazing upon the party with a vacant stare, mixed with apprehension, welcomed them with smiles, and seemed to recognise the governor as a friend.

The Cingalese have the distinction of caste among them, but it has nothing to do with *religion*. The Bhuddist priest is taken from any order of men indiscriminately, and all that is required is a suitable education; but, *politically*, the distinction of caste is carried to the utmost excess. In the schools, and even at church, the Vallales and the Challias will not sit together; and the lower classes are not permitted either to wear the comb, to tile their houses, or to have the tom-tom beat at weddings. Aristocracy is no where so intolerant as in Ceylon. The governor intimated to his Lordship that he should strongly recommend to the crown that this island should be placed [1] under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Calcutta. Bishop Middleton thought that episcopal superintendance, and the discharge of episcopal functions in this part, would certainly be productive of great benefit. The natives have evidently a natural bias towards order and rule; and if they perceived that there was a power which could ordain clergy, consecrate churches, and confirm youth, and in general exert authority, the scales would clearly turn in favour of the church. The clergy and missionaries of all persuasions, except the Americans, who are puritans, called upon the Bishop. The missionaries attend the service of the church, and were present when his Lordship delivered a dis-

[1] This was afterwards done.

course that was afterwards published.[1] Here he laid the foundation of a committee of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, in addition to the committee which he had already established in the three presidencies.[2] His Lordship, Mrs. Middleton, and his attendants returned to Calcutta, where they arrived on the 10th of December, and, on landing, were received with marked attention by the clergy.

Relieved from the labours of the visitation, he was enabled to apply his mind to the concerns of the city, and resumed his share in the duties of the pulpit. On Christmas-day, 1816, he preached to a congregation of nine hundred persons, of whom one hundred and eighty received the sacrament from his hands. On New-year's-day, 1817, he also preached upon Gal. vi. 15., and took the opportunity of disclaiming those mischievous and absurb inferences, which are supposed to be deducible from the doctrine of regeneration; as, that baptism is sufficient to salvation, and is a remission of all sins which are afterwards committed; that the *opus operatum* is every thing, &c.; with which he had reason to believe, that some of his hearers, who had been exceedingly hurt at the inferences contained in the commentaries upon some tracts then recently published in England, felt great satisfaction. For it appears that the consequences of all the controversies in England reached India, and were doing injury to the Christian cause. Nothing was wanting to complete the mischief, except an intemperate spirit on the part of the Bishop. But he pursued a different course. At the same time he made no unjust sacrifice to popularity.

The Bishop, whose attention was always directed towards prevailing opinions, soon found that the mere distribution of

[1] See the sermon in the body of this work.

[2] The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, at the time of the Bishop's arrival in India, were as active to disseminate Christianity in the East as their means and information afforded; but the appointment of Dr. Middleton to the see of Calcutta opened a field for greater exertion; and the establishment of these committees enabled them to ascertain with greater accuracy in what manner their efforts might be beneficially extended.

the Scriptures would produce little effect in promoting Christianity among the natives. When his Lordship was at Bombay, a Parsee (one of the adherents to the religion of Zoroaster) told a clergyman, that he supposed, as the Bishop was come, they must all think of being Christians; but he hoped that the Bishop would not give them "great books, but small ones to begin with, for they could not understand a great deal at once." His lordship considered the remark generally true: and that little advantage could be expected, except by schools and tracts. Of the latter, very few then in India were suited to the state of the country.

Bishop Middleton's mode of life after his return to Calcutta, exhibits his incessant diligence. He rose at an early hour, and was generally on horseback before the sun appeared. Then he retired to his library, to keep up a correspondence with his archdeacons in the distant provinces, with the governor-general, and with the board of control in England. To this was added, the composition of sermons, which he was now in the habit of preaching every third Sunday, and which he continued through the year. Some part of the morning he was necessarily engaged in paying and receiving visits. The first and third Monday, in the month he invited the clergy to dinner. And thus, with an hour for exercise before that repast, which was at the hour of seven, his day was occupied.

But amidst the various and arduous duties which continually engrossed his attention, he did not suffer his feelings [1]

[1] A remarkable proof of this, and of his devotional frame of mind, is exhibited in the following Prayer, composed by himself, and used in the daily service which was performed in a private room in his house, fitted up for that purpose: —

"Almighty Father, whose Providence hath conducted us to these distant shores, we implore thee to prosper all our undertakings, which have for their object the welfare of our brethren, and the glory of thy holy name. Thou hast brought us to a land, where all who are sincerely devoted to thy service, may find occasions of doing good, and where the single talent may be usefully employed. Grant, O Lord, that whatever our hand findeth to do, we may do it with all our might. Save us from the effects of indolence and indifference: awaken our zeal, quicken our exertions, and

towards his friends in England to lapse into indifference. Frequent letters were despatched to each of them, filled not only with an account of his proceedings, but with expressions of pleasing recollection of persons and scenes which he had left in his native land. [1] These were occasionally interspersed

enable us to persevere steadily and consistently in those endeavours which thy Holy Spirit may suggest to us. We beseech thee also, to vouchsafe us such a portion of health, as may be necessary to the discharge of our active duties, without suffering us to forget our dependence upon thee; or, if it should please thy Providence to afflict us, teach us to bear our sickness patiently, and turn it to our spiritual improvement. And while we implore thy mercy on ourselves, we commend to thy especial protection our relatives, and all who are dear to us, in our native land. Bless them, O Lord, and let them remember us in their prayers. And to as many of us as thy Providence shall permit to return to our country, grant that we may find those who shall remain to us, increased in every spiritual grace, and advancing in the way of holiness; that so we may employ whatever further portion of life thy wisdom may assign us in the endearing charities of kindred and holy friendship; and exhorting one another to good works, as the day approacheth, we may all pass to that better country, which thou hast promised to those that love thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

[1] The Bishop seldom failed to impress the mind of the person whom he was addressing in his epistolary correspondence. On one occasion, I find him writing in the following manner:— "Before this time, you are I imagine, in orders; and though moderate attainments in theology, when accompanied with what is beyond all attainments, will make a clergyman respectable; yet, where there is ability, I am of opinion that something more is required. I will even add, that a clergyman seems bounden, by the very tenor of his engagements, to dedicate his talents to the studies of his profession; not meaning, however, that he should confine himself to the Scriptures, or to the languages and writings which illustrate them, though these should be primary objects, but that all his studies, more or less remotely, should have in view the advancement of religion, and the glory of God: and this, I conceive, is compatible with pursuits, which give acuteness and vigour to the understanding, or which expand the imagination, or which store the mind with facts; arguments, and eloquence, and knowledge, may be brought to bear upon a given point, by the advocate of eternal truth.

"I have often lamented, that young men who have gained credit at the taking of their first degree (at Cambridge), act afterwards as if they were exempted from all exertion; the honours which they may have obtained at the age, perhaps, of twenty-one, fully satisfy their ambition, and they seem determined to rest upon them for the remainder of their lives; whereas in truth they are intrinsically nothing; though, considered as letters of recommendation, and facilities afforded to success in the real business of life, they are of the highest value, and really deserve the pains

with reflections on the speed with which he perceived his lamp of life was burning, and the alteration of his appearance; and, consequently, the small chance of his again enjoying the society of his distant friends. But such thoughts, indicating the tenderness of his heart, were comparatively but of an hour. The great cause in which he was engaged, soon recalled the energy of his mind, and carried him along the path of duty with dignity and effect.

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bestowed in acquiring them. But it is one of the instances in which men mistake means for ends, which I suppose to be the great practical error of human life."

On another occasion, he gave his opinion on the study of Hebrew: — "I wish," he said, "that a certain quantity of Hebrew learning were made indispensable in all candidates for orders. It is best learnt, I think, with the points: not that I ascribe to them a high antiquity, or believe that they constitute the '*Hebræa veritas*;' quite otherwise; but without them, we have no system of pronunciation at all: we must make our own points; and considering that the same three consonants, accordingly as we point them, may be either a verb or a substantive; and if a verb, of different voices and moods; without some system, we must get into endless confusion. I know, indeed, that the variety of meanings which the same consonants admit is made an argument *against* the Masoretic punctuation; but this is only saying that we will have nothing to do with a rule, which is not infallible. So far as I have observed, the Masoretes agree generally with the Septuagint, where the latter have any agreement with the present Hebrew text; for where they differ, the Masoretes have generally given the more probable sense. It is something, too, that the memory of the learner of a dead language should be aided by a settled system of pronunciation, and one which admits a great variety of sounds, distinctive of the different uses of what the Anti-Masoretes would call the same word: *e. g. saphar*, he wrote; *sopher*, a scribe; *sepher*, a book; is still merely *sepher*: this surely cannot be meant to facilitate the progress of the learner. By the way, what do you make of the *gnain* or *ain*? All the old grammars give it the power of *gn* or *ng*: but, if we may trust the modern Jews, who are strongly supported by the Septuagint, and by the use of the same letter in the cognate languages of Arabic and Syriac, it is little more than a breathing; and in the beginning and middle of a word is scarcely perceptible. The Septuagint sometimes omit it in the Greek, and sometimes represent it by a gamma. The word Baal-Peor furnishes an instance of both. I have little doubt that this letter was the parent of the Greek digamma."

The above extracts were made from letters addressed to the Rev. Hastings Robinson, of St. John's College, Cambridge.

Naturally zealous and alive to every occurrence that opposed the progress of the establishment of which he was the head, it might be expected that painful feelings would be excited in his breast, which in a less eminent person might have been dormant. Among the many and great difficulties which attend on a man in a high and responsible situation, are those of ascertaining the truth of the reports made to him, and rectifying misrepresentations. These retard the course of ministration. Such was the lot of Bishop Middleton; but, however much they agitated his ardent mind, their effect was soon counteracted by his benevolence and rectitude.

In his official capacity he was not inattentive to external appearances: and if in this respect it be thought that he exceeded the bounds of Christian simplicity, the motive should not be overlooked. In a country habituated to ceremony and splendour, he conceived, that the importance of his station could not be conveyed to the public mind, without some appearance of the state which surrounded other officers of distinction. The well-regulated mind, indeed, requires no higher excitement to veneration, than the weight of the episcopal commission; yet, on the inconsiderate and unenlightened, the appearance of a moderate external dignity may have a beneficial effect.

About this time it appears that he received documents relating to a doubt entertained by the chaplains of the presidency-church at Madras, respecting the right of the archdeacons to the use of the pulpit. The chaplains remonstrated against further submissions injurious to their rights; and declared, that they esteemed the pulpit to be as entirely their own as it is the right of a rector or vicar in England; and solemnly protested against the archdeacon's occupation of it at will. To this the Bishop replied, that the whole of the proceeding was founded in a misconception of the nature and [illegible] which English clergymen hold in India. These documents, not merely in one of the passages to which he had referred, but generally and throughout, were framed upon

the assumption that the East India Company's chaplains were to be taken as parochial incumbents. It was his earnest wish, as a friend to every measure which could add to the respectability and increase the usefulness of his clergy, that he might live to see them put upon that most desirable footing; but till that should be accomplished, all reasoning founded upon the rights of the beneficed clergy in England must evidently be fallacious; and could only tend to confusion. A rector in England is, indeed, "*persona ecclesiæ*," in full possession of all the rights of a parochial church: his spiritual rights are conveyed to him by institution, and his temporal rights by induction; but in India, except in the case of the archdeacons, there is neither institution or induction, nor any oath against simony, but the whole tenure is simply a nomination from the local government, in consequence of a general appointment by the Court of Directors, upon which the Bishop is authorised to grant his licence, if he see fit. To license the chaplains, is all the Bishop has to do: he cannot give them institution. The licence granted is the same, which in England is granted to stipendiary curates on their nomination by an incumbent, and the effect of the licence is not only to authorise the chaplain to officiate, but to prevent his removal against his will, unless the Bishop shall see fit to revoke the licence; and certainly to give him an exclusive right to his pulpit against all other chaplains, not authorised in like manner to assist him in his duties.

But after the original misconception, the Bishop was not surprised that the presidency-chaplains did not perceive the ground of the archdeacon's claims. They remarked, indeed, very truly, that it was not by the archdeacon, that the law had provided for the duties of the pulpit. The thing is in its own nature impossible both in England and India: in England, it is by incumbents, or those to whom they delegate their duties, and with respect to India, the law has recognised the right of the East India Company to send English clergymen to officiate at the stations, to which they shall

be appointed and licensed. But these stations are not parishes, and of course they have no parochial churches: and it seems not to have been considered that the case of the principal church at Madras and at Bombay is, if possible, still further removed than the others, from the analogy of a church in an English parish.

But still the question remained, in the present instance, "What were the rights of the Archdeacon of Madras, with respect to the presidency church?" The chaplains admitted, without reserve, his claim to the oversight of the duties of the pulpit, and to watch and enforce the due performance of them; and the Bishop added, that all matters of regulation, which would fall within the province of the Bishop, if he were upon the spot, belong to the archdeacon, subject in case of doubt or dispute to the Bishop's revision.

With regard, however, to the archdeacon's duties in the service of the church, the Bishop saw no reason to depart from the tenor of a former letter which he had addressed to the archdeacon. He therein gave it as his judgment, that the archdeacon ought to preach on the principal festivals, and at other times occasionally, about which he certainly did not foresee any chance of dispute. The presidency chaplains, however, observed, that in that letter the Bishop did not advert to the law of the case, or the custom of the church; and they expressed concern, in which he heartily participated, that on that occasion his sentiments had not afforded them full satisfaction. He, however, suggested to them, that when they asked for laws, and canons, and customs of the church strictly and verbally applicable to such cases as that under consideration, they asked for what not only does not, but cannot exist. All these suppose, with respect to the clergy, the existence of parishes, and with respect to dignities, that of a cathedral within a practicable distance, to which such dignitaries are to repair at stated times, and to take their portion of duty. But their dignities are not usually their only preferments; an archdeacon, especially, has commonly

a benefice within the limits of the archdeaconry, where he at once attends to the ecclesiastical concerns of his jurisdiction, and discharges, within the limits of his parish, the duties of a parochial incumbent. Now nothing of all this applied to the state of India, for neither could the Archdeacon of Madras be expected to go at stated times to the cathedral at Calcutta, neither had he any cure exclusively his own within his archdeaconry, nor indeed any where; so that according to the view of the subject taken by the presidency chaplains of Madras, the archdeacons of Madras and Bombay could never be heard from the pulpits of their respective churches, unless by asking leave of the chaplains. It was impossible in the Bishop's opinion, to suppose that the legislature intended any thing so humiliating to the archdeacons, or that they would have created an appointment, which thus, instead of tending to give dignity and consideration to the established religion, would rather involve it in discredit from the apparent supineness of the higher clergy in maintaining and advancing Christianity. His Majesty, by his letters patent, had directed, that in future the archdeaconries should be given, as they become vacant, to chaplains of the Company; intending no doubt the encouragement and reward of superior learning and piety; but if clergymen, thus honourably recommended, are to be *ipso facto* silenced by their appointment, a regard for the interests of religion ought perhaps to lead the Bishop to select for his archdeacons persons of inferior qualifications.

The Bishop, therefore, had no scruple in considering the right of the archdeacons to take part in the duties of the principal church in their respective archdeaconries, to be a right intended and implied in their very appointment, and virtually conveyed to them by their institution; and that, even though the presidency chaplains were "*personæ ecclesiæ*," (if indeed the definition of that character, as cited from Blackstone, will allow us to suppose two "*personæ*" in one and the same church,) his Lordship was still of opinion, that this would be no bar to the right of the archdeacon to a certain

participation in the use of the pulpit, inasmuch as the chaplains could not hold their rights by a fuller sanction, than that upon which the archdeacon grounded his claim.

But the Bishop did not think it necessary to insist upon what, in his diocese, was merely hypothetical: in that country there were neither rectors, vicars, nor parishes, and he conceived that the share, which the archdeacon should take in the service of the principal church within his archdeaconry, was entirely matter of episcopal regulation.

In Bombay, he assigned to the archdeacon the same Sundays and festivals for his turn in preaching, which he had given to himself as bishop in the cathedral, *viz.* the morning of the Circumcision, Septuagesima Sunday, Mid-Lent Sunday, Easter-day, Whitsunday, the first Sunday in Advent, and Christmas-day. These occasions he wished the archdeacon to consider as his proper turns, to be taken, however, by the chaplain, whose turn it would otherwise be, if the archdeacon be sick, or necessarily absent. But he still thought, that an archdeacon confining himself to his appointed turns, would hardly be actuated with the earnestness and zeal which might reasonably be expected from his station. On the other hand, he was aware that rights pushed to extremities, or exercised in an uncourteous or inconsiderate manner, frequently become wrongs: and he should not approve any needless or vexatious interference of an archdeacon with the chaplains in their reasonable claims. In general, if the archdeacon wished to preach occasionally, he would not exceed his just participation in the use of the pulpit by preaching once in a month, in which he had not an appointed turn.

This wise and temperate decision did not fail to have considerable weight with the clergy at Madras: but when the Bishop visited that presidency at a subsequent period, it appeared that it had not been received by them with that entire approbation which it deserved.

On the 7th of August, 1818, the Bishop laid the foundation-stone of the church at Dum Dum, the station of the artillery,

which he afterwards consecrated, and in which he confirmed several persons, chiefly soldiers of the station.

Soon after this occurrence, he had an acquisition to his domestic circle in his chaplain, Mr. Hawtayne, of Exeter College, Oxford, whose worth the bishop fully appreciated. The time for a second visitation of his diocese was fast approaching; and the interval between his return to Calcutta and the present period was much employed upon a work on the Syrian ritual, which unhappily was never brought to a completion.

On the 10th of February, 1819, he embarked in the Stanmore to visit his diocese a second time, being attended by Mrs. Middleton and his chaplain, Mr. Hawtayne, and anchored in Madras roads on the 27th of the same month. He landed on the following morning, when he was received by the archdeacon and clergy. In the evening, Mrs. Elliot, wife of the governor, died: and the Bishop offered to perform the last offices at her funeral. On the Sunday he preached at the fort church, in which she was interred, expressly on the occasion.

Whilst he remained at Madras, he preached every Sunday at St. George's, and once more at the fort; he attended two meetings of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge: the consequences of which he hoped would be the restoration of the Vepery press to more than its former activity. He visited the Vepery mission: and wrote to the Parent Society in London generally on its affairs, and particularly on an increase of missionaries. With the native Christians he had a long conference, and pointed out the impropriety of their retaining heathen processions with tom-toms, &c., at their weddings, contrary to the order of their head. Three hundred and seventeen persons received the rite of confirmation from his hands: they were composed of all ranks, from the son and daughter of the governor, to the children and orphans of the common soldier. After the service, he exhorted them at considerable length, and distributed amongst them his

address, which had been previously printed. The visitation of the clergy and delivery of a charge to them, occupied a portion of his time. He looked into the system of teaching at the Male Asylum, and used his influence to put that institution upon a system of greater regularity. He also consecrated the fort burying ground, and the church and burying ground at Poonamalee; and wrote to the Madras government, pressing the necessity of the erection of a church at Vepery, and an increase in the number of chaplains.

Having attended to every point of importance, and spent the Easter at this presidency, he embarked on the 14th April for Penang. On the voyage, the ship encountered rough weather, and passed so near the shore of Car-Nicobar island, as to afford a view of the huts of the inhabitants, which resembled bee-hives, being somewhat of that shape, and standing on piles. The inhabitants of this island are a race of savages. The remainder of the voyage had the prospect of not being more favourable than the beginning. For a ship appeared which was supposed to belong to a pirate, and preparations were made for an action, but in the end the vessel was discovered to be a merchantmen; and the Stanmore anchored at Penang on the 29th without further alarm. The day following the Bishop landed, and breakfasted with the governor at Suffolk.

On the 2d of May he preached at the New church; a subsequent day was occupied in examining the children of the Free School; and on the 8th he held a confirmation, when twenty-six children received that rite in the presence of a numerous congregation: to whom he delivered and distributed an address, as he had done at Madras. On the following Sunday, he again preached with reference to the death of Queen Charlotte.[1] The consecration of the church and burying-ground, and administration of the sacrament to twenty-five

[1] In 1818 the Bishop preached a very impressive sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte. It is much to be regretted that it was not published, and that it was destroyed with his other papers.

persons, (being a much greater number than had ever been known at the celebration of that sacred ordinance in the island,) as well as the formation of a district committee of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in conjunction with Bencoolen, also occupied his time and attention. The Bishop held the first meeting of the society before he left Penang, which received great encouragement from the governor and persons present. He preached a sermon on local matters, which the governor requested him to publish.[1] It derived its chief interest from its being delivered by an English prelate in the straits of Malacca, on an island, where, forty years before, monkeys and tigers held their undisturbed dominion. It was intended only to convey pastoral instruction adapted to the circumstances of the inhabitants, and an affectionate farewell to a small community, which the Bishop had no prospect of ever seeing again. After attending to every circumstance which promised benefit to this remote part of his diocese, and receiving the marked attention and thanks of the government, he returned to the vessel, which weighed anchor on the 20th, on her return to Calcutta.

Their course lay along the northern shore of Sumatra, which they coasted as far as Acheen Head. The remaining part of the voyage was impressed upon the Bishop's memory; and he described it to a friend in the following terms. "Off Acheen Head lie several islands, which, with the Golden Mountain on the coast of Sumatra, form an assemblage of grand scenery. Through these we passed in a fine evening, with smooth water and a gentle breeze. The setting sun exhibited the whole to the greatest advantage, by throwing a mild yet steady light upon parts of the scene, and leaving the rest in 'darkness visible.'" The Bishop had never, either in nature or art, seen the contrast of light and shade so finely marked, or displayed on so large a scale. In the morning the ship had made its way into the bay of Bengal, and the

[1] See the body of this work.

scene was completely changed. Stormy weather succeeded. Provisions were beginning to fail, and for four days the sun was so obscured, that no observation could be made to ascertain where they were, or direct them to the pilot-station: and without a pilot the ship could not enter the river. Happily they made the station, and were carried into the river; where they arrived on Sunday the 13th June, and joined in divine service with feelings of peculiar delight. Immediately afterwards boats came with a supply of fruit and vegetables, and they ate their repast "with gladness and singleness of heart."

The Bishop, being arrived at Calcutta, found that sectaries of all denominations were landing in the country, which might distract the opinions of the natives, and prevent the progress of religion according to the tenets of the Church of England. But he considered the raising of that church in India practicable, if all the clergy under his jurisdiction concurred in his views. In this he was often disappointed. Still he was determined to exert his utmost ability to obtain this great object. He preached every third Sunday, and delivered his lectures on the litany every alternate Sunday evening. Besides this, he allotted to himself seven Sundays and holidays in the year, and the same number to the archdeacon. Every Wednesday during Lent, the children of the boarding-schools were catechised by the chaplain, except in Passion week, when he himself undertook to hear the best proficients, and examined them in Bishop Mann's exposition. At the same time he delivered to them an address, which he afterwards distributed among them.

The bishopric, totally undefined as to its powers, was a difficult and almost an unmanageable undertaking: and in the progress of his efforts, it was not surprising that the eminent person who filled it, should find himself impeded in various quarters. A Scotch church had been erected at Calcutta; a missionary of the independents set a subscription on foot for an Union Chapel: and the Baptists used unremitting endeavours to disseminate their tenets, and erected

schools for the natives. They conceived that their pretensions to notice were considerable, having been established at Calcutta and in the provinces nearly thirty years; and they solicited the attention of the Bishop to their design; but, as might be expected, he declined embarking in their enterprise.

Bishop Middleton, though a man of the most acute feeling, was too firm a character to suffer either the principles or the government of the church to be compromised. He felt as the first Bishop of Ephesus must have done, when he received the epistle of St. Paul, that it was not for him to give way to opposite opinions, however charitably he might deal with them.

When we consider the dreadful superstitions of the natives, the contending sentiments of sectaries, and the obstacles thrown in the way of discipline, we may form an adequate estimate of the mental labour of this zealous and upright prelate.

Some time before his second return to Calcutta, the Bishop had sent a proposition to the board of control, that he should have the power of assigning salaries of from 200*l.* to 300*l.* each, to not more than four persons, Europeans or "country-born," ordained by the bishop of Calcutta, and capable of preaching to the natives, Portuguese, and "country-born," in the languages of the East. These were not to be precisely missionaries, but designed to bring into the communion of our church, a large class of stragglers at the several presidencies. But the project did not take effect. All these things the Bishop felt were against the cause entrusted to him, namely, the settlement of the church in India. The situation was trying, and he almost sunk under its pressure. He endeavoured to act, and prayed to God to direct him in all things for the best; but he seemed as a man turned adrift upon the ocean, without either sail or oar.

To increase his anxiety about this time, Mr. Pœzold and Mr. Pohle, missionaries from the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, died; and the trust was left in the sole hands of Mr. Kohlhoff, a person advanced in life, and unable

to sustain the weight of duty. The Bishop saw that, unless the mission were strengthened, it must cease; and he made a strong representation of the case to the parent-society in London.

Other hopes were blighted; a distinguished Hindoo, of whose entire conversion to Christianity reasonable expectations were formed, now appeared approaching to deism, and there was little chance of his being established in the faith.

The buildings of the Free School of which the bishop was patron, and for which he had obtained masters from England, had been enlarged, and an increase of scholars was expected; the population of Calcutta was rapidly extending, and especially the class who would be benefited by the school. This was a pleasing circumstance, but he lamented that he had not the means of being useful on a more extended scale. Institutions are every thing in the East. A prelate to be efficient in this respect must be a founder; for there piety and munificence are almost synonymous. Every Brahmin of high rank is a sort of grand almoner. They have often vast funds for this purpose; and this in fact is the ground of the great consideration attached to their functions.

The Bishop explained his views to persons in England connected with India affairs, and stated that whatever was allowed for the extension of his jurisdiction to Ceylon, (a measure then in contemplation,) he wished to appropriate to the interests of religion in that island.

Two points appeared necessary to the diffusion of Christianity in the East; the sending out of missionaries by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and a power vested in the Bishop to ordain ministers to officiate to the "country born," or native congregation. On the latter, it was necessary that the Bishop should obtain the opinion of some civilian in England, and on the former, the certainty of fixed stipends for such as should be ordained.

Four stationed committees had been established in the archdeaconry of Calcutta; one as far north as the neighbour-

hood of Delhi; and the Bishop's mind, which had been long depressed by the feeble state of the missions, revived upon receiving information of the liberal grant of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for their support.

The society, in consequence of a representation from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the president, invited his Lordship to co-operate with them, and to suggest such measures, as might appear to him best calculated to promote their designs.

Bishop Middleton rejoiced in the opportunity thus afforded him, of discharging more extensively the momentous duty of his diocese; and recommended the establishment of a college in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta.

Whilst this plan was in agitation he received an account of the death of Archdeacon Mousley, at Madras, a person whom he held in the highest esteem. The Archdeacon was so much respected and beloved, that great deference was paid to him, even by those who, on some points, differed from him in opinion. He was a good divine, and an eminent Orientalist. In the latter character he was well known at Oxford; and went to India chiefly to prosecute that line of study. To perpetuate the memory of so estimable a person, the Bishop wrote the following inscription for his monument: —

Hoc marmore
Viri venerandi JOHANNIS MOUSLEY, S. T. P.
Collegii Balliolensis olim Socii
Primi Archidiaconi Madrasensis
Memoriam servandam voluit
Suamque pietatem tradendam posteris
Cœtus Christianorum Madrasensium
Is fuit oris vultusque habitus
Ea sermonis et gestus verecundia
Quæ divinius quiddam et vere Christianum
Præ se ferebat.
Eruditio varia
In literis sacris sane magna
In orientalibus summa.
Ad vitam umbratilem natura comparatus
Ad negotia tamen nec segnis nec inhabilis
Judicium sanum exquisitum perspicax
Mens constans rectique tenax
Ecclesiæ, Anglicanæ si quis alius
Fidus alumnus.
Cujus jura et auctoritatem
Ea sustinuit comitate et prudentiâ
Ut apud invidos invidiam non conflarit
Faventes acriore studio devinxerit.
Lethali ingravescente morbo
Summis doloribus affectus
Nihil se pati professus est
Nisi quod juvante deo
Saluti conduceret æternæ.
Animam Christo reddidit
Die xxxi Augusti
Anno Redemptoris MDCCCXIX
Ætatis XLVIII.

In November, 1820, the Bishop laid the foundation-stone of a church at Calcutta, in the centre of a numerous European population, who had no means of attending divine worship. Mr. Hawtayne offered to serve it gratuitously; and, since the Bishop's decease, has been appointed by the Marquis of Hastings to be the permanent chaplain. Near this sacred edifice, which is dedicated to St. James, a school was erected for the use of the Christian poor; the expense of which was

defrayed by a legacy bequeathed to the Bishop by an officer[1], aided by a donation from the Bishop himself.

But to advert to the college, which now occupied his mind. He had expressed its object in the letters which he transmitted to England; and the plan was worthy of the projector. It designed the education of youth in sacred knowledge, in sound learning, in the principal languages used in the East, and in habits of piety and devotion to their calling, that they might be qualified to preach among the heathen.[2] The attention of the learned persons connected with it, was to be directed to accurate versions of the Scriptures, of the liturgy, and other religious books: it was to endeavour to disseminate useful knowledge by means of schools, under teachers well educated for the purpose: and it was to aim at the combining and consolidating, as far as possible, into one system, and the directing into the same course of sentiment and action, the endeavours which were making to advance the Christian cause.

The favour and patronage of the public in England was eminently shown towards the projected institution. The King's letter, granted to the Society for the propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, was productive beyond all former example; and other religious societies and public bodies munificently aided the work.

In December 1820, the plans and estimates for the building were matured, and a plot of ground on the bank of the river, within three miles of Calcutta, containing twenty acres, had been granted by the government for the site of it. To this, C. T. Metcalfe, Esq., the resident at Hyderabad, contributed a piece of land adjacent; by which the estate was greatly improved. The Societies for the propagation of the Gospel, and promoting Christian Knowledge, gave each 5000*l*., to which the Church Missionary Society added a si-

[1] The late Captain Henry Oake.

[2] See a sermon preached by the Bishop at Calcutta, 5d December 1820, in the body of the work.

milar donation. The Bishop contributed 400*l.*[1] for the fitting-up and embellishment of the chapel, and Mrs. Middleton a handsome set of plate for the communion table. Thus prepared, on the 15th of the same month, his Lordship, with much solemnity, laid the foundation-stone.[2]

The college was founded for a principal and two professors[3], and for as many students as its funds shall enable the society to maintain; and as can afterwards be provided for as missionaries, schoolmasters, and catechists, at the stations to which they shall be appointed: these stations to be under the episcopal jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastical or spiritual, and subject in other points to the visitor of the college. As the object of the institution is definite, no students can be admitted who are intended for secular situations in life. The design of the institution is as comprehensive as it is benevolent. It extends to such parts of the continent and islands of Asia, as are under the protection and authority of Great Britain.

The whole arrangement of the building was planned by the Bishop, assisted in the selection of the ornaments by his chaplain, Mr. Hawtayne; and the statutes were drawn up by his Lordship. The building occupies three sides of a quadrangle, and contains every requisite for a college; a hall, chapel, library, and press. The centre is 150 feet in length, and the two wings are each 150 feet. It stands in a prominent situation, on ground adjoining the Company's Botanic Garden, opening to the South, and commanding a fine expanse of water, over which every vessel must pass in going to Calcutta; and is a marked object in approaching the capital of the East.

[1] In addition to this contribution, the Bishop bequeathed 500*l.* to the college at the decease of his widow, and 500 volumes out of his library; which are now there.

[2] The service performed on the occasion will be found in the body of this work.

[3] On the 16th December, 1822, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge voted 6000*l.* to be placed at the disposal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and recommended that five scholarships should be founded in this college, to be called Bishop Middleton's Scholarships.

Having thus accomplished in part what his mind had dwelt upon with intense interest, in January 1821 he embarked to visit Bombay, which he had not reached in the former part of his second visitation.

He arrived at Bombay in the latter end of February. Though free from bodily disease, the Bishop at this time did not feel the elasticity of spirit which he once possessed, and was sensible that he was unequal to the burden of his duty. He, however, held a visitation of his clergy; at which Mr. Robinson preached a sermon, that was highly approved by the Bishop, and published at his request. He confirmed also one hundred and twenty persons, and consecrated two churches.

On his return from Bombay, on the 19th April, 1821, he went on shore at Cochin, in order to have an interview with the Metropolitan of the Syrians. He conceived this to be a point of some importance; because in the Missionary Register were passages which seemed to imply, that the church missionaries were introducing the English liturgy, and that this ancient branch of Christianity was coming over rapidly to the church of England. It occurred to the Bishop, that if this were true, he ought to know it from authority; and therefore he resolved to accomplish an object so nearly affecting the interests of the church. The next day he had an interview with the Syrian bishop, and spent two hours with him, having no other person present than an interpreter, on whom he could rely. The result was, that he found the Syrians in the same state as that in which he left them on his former visitation, and without any visible approximation to the church of England; and that if ever there should be, it would be communicated to the Bishop of Calcutta.[1] He ascertained that the church-missionaries did, indeed, expound the Scriptures, in the churches of this part of the peninsula, to all who would hear them, and that it was well received by the people, to whom it was somewhat new; but the Syrian bishop assured

[1] See an extract from Principal Mill's Letter, in the Appendix.

him, that nothing was done of which he had any reason to complain. He said that he then resided at the Syrian college, where the missionaries were professors, and that they had not begun to print. Bishop Middleton observed, in reply, that there would be a Syrian press at the college at Calcutta, and asked if one of the Syrian clergy would go to assist at it. The Metropolitan smiled, and said, he did not think that any of them could be prevailed upon to go to such a distance, being all unwilling to quit their own churches for more than a day at a time. Bishop Middleton still hoped that one might be prevailed upon to give his assistance, and that the Calcutta press would print in Syriac as well as in all the learned languages. He looked forward to the time, when the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel would be as famous for its learned publications, as any other in the world.

After this interview he again went on board; and on Easter-day, being then off Cape Comorin, the most southern point of the Indian continent, he performed the whole service, preached and administered the sacrament to Mrs. Middleton, who accompanied him in all his visitations, and to as many Protestants as there were in the ship. His feelings, always alive to devotion and to local circumstances, were impressed more than usual, though but few were gathered together.

From Cape Comorin the Bishop proceeded to Ceylon, and spent more than a month at Colombo. Here a special meeting of the District Committee of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge was held at His Lordship's request, which gave a new impulse to its proceedings; and there was every reason to believe that the efficacy of the society would in consequence be greater than it had been. The Bishop, besides a handsome donation from himself, gave the committee 300*l.* sterling, which was granted to him by His Majesty, for the support of religious institutions. This was accompanied by a particular desire on the part of the Bishop, that the money might be applied to the exclusive purpose of translating

the Society's tracts into the native language of Ceylon, and printing them for the use of the inhabitants.[1]

On his return to Calcutta, he found there Mr. Mill, of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Mr. Alt, of Pembroke Hall, who had arrived from England on the 13th of February preceding, during his absence; the former to fill the office of principal, and the latter that of a professor in the college.

He found also that diocesan business awaited him. He had instituted a consistory court at Calcutta, and steps had been taken to erect the same at Madras: but doubts of its legality were started, and the case was referred to Sir S. Toller, Advocate-General at Madras; who, to the surprise of the Bishop, decided against the measure.

Sir S. Toller stated that he had perused the papers sent to him, with attention, and that on recurring to the letters patent on the subject, and to the statute on which they were founded, he was of opinion, that they do not confer any legal authority for the establishment of such a court.

By the statute 53 Geo. III. c. 155. sect. 51., it is provided, that the bishop shall not have or use any jurisdiction, or exercise any episcopal functions, either in the East Indies, or elsewhere, but only such jurisdiction and functions as shall be limited to him by the letters patent.

[1] See letter to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge from the Rev. C. J. Lyon, chaplain to the forces at Colombo, 31st May, 1821. The Society stated in their report for 1816, that through the active superintendence of the Bishop, the designs of the Society, in the establishment of diocesan and district committees, were carried into full effect. The primary meeting of the Diocesan District Committee was formed at Madras on the 21st August, 1815, at Bombay on the 8th June, 1816, and at Colombo in the same year. On the settlement of the committee at the last place, the Bishop availed himself of the vote of credit granted by the Society, considering this a favourable opportunity to promote the printing of a Cingalese version of the Book of Common Prayer, which would be very useful, and could not be otherwise accomplished. He engaged a competent person to make the translation, without expence. This book had been printed in the Tamul language, at Madras, towards which government gave 200*l.*, and the Bishop 40*l.* — See Society's Report, 1816.

By sect. 52. His Majesty is empowered by letters patent, to grant to the bishop such ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the exercise of such episcopal functions, in the East Indies, as His Majesty shall think necessary for the administration of holy ceremonies, and for the superintendence and good government of the church establishment in the East Indies.

By the uniform tenor of the letters patent, His Lordship is, conformably to the statute, empowered to exercise no other jurisdiction than spiritual or ecclesiastical jurisdiction in his diocese. They authorize him to grant licences to officiate, to all ministers and chaplains of all churches and chapels, within his diocese, belonging to the church of England; and to visit such clergy with ecclesiastical coercion; as also to call before him, or his commissary, at such times and places as shall seem to him convenient, the aforesaid clergy: and enquire by witnesses, to be sworn in due form of law, and by all other effectual means, concerning their morals and behaviour. They also empower him and his commissary to administer oaths, according to the ecclesiastical laws of England, and to punish and correct the clergy according to their demerits, whether by deprivation, suspension, or other ecclesiastical censure, or correction, according to the ecclesiastical laws aforesaid. They confer on him the power of collating to the office of archdeacon, after the death or avoidance of the present archdeacons. They declare that each of the archdeacons shall, within his archdeaconry, be assisting to the bishop in the exercise of such episcopal jurisdiction and functions, according to the duty of an archdeacon, by the said ecclesiastical law. And they declare that each of the archdeacons shall, within his archdeaconry, be taken to be without further appointment the commissary of the bishop, and shall exercise jurisdiction in all the matters aforesaid, according to the duty and function of a commissary; and they enjoin the court of directors, and their governors, officers, and servants, and His Majesty's governors, judges, and justices, and others within the parts aforesaid, to be aiding and assisting to the said bishop and

archdeacons in the execution of the premises: nevertheless, declaring and ordaining, that in all grave matters of correction, which are accustomed, and according to the practice of the ecclesiastical laws of England, to be judicially examined, the same shall in like manner be judicially examined, and proceeded in, before the bishop, or his commissary, in the archdeaconry in which the party to be proceeded against shall reside; and all such causes shall be proceeded in to final sentence in due form of law.

The letters patent then direct, that the bishop may appoint a registrar to act in each archdeaconry; and further, they ordain, that if any person, against whom a judgment or decree shall be pronounced by the bishop or his commissary, shall conceive himself aggrieved thereby, he may appeal to His Majesty's commissioners delegate, consisting of the judges of the supreme court at Calcutta, and the members of the council at that city; and further, that the person appointed to act as the registrar of the archdeaconry of Calcutta, shall act as registrar of the commissioners delegate; and that in case any proceeding shall be instituted against any archdeacon, such proceeding shall be original, and carried before the commissioners delegate; and in case any archdeacon, or chaplain duly appointed, shall be, for any cause whatever, deprived of his said office, or suspended therefrom, or inhibited from preaching or exercising his holy office within the presidency to which he shall have been appointed, or shall be subjected to any ecclesiastical punishment, or censure, by the bishop, or by the commissary, a copy of the sentence in such case promulgated and given, setting forth the causes of such deprivation, suspension, or other ecclesiastical punishment, or censure, shall without delay be certified and transmitted by the bishop, or his commissary, to the governor-general in council, or the governor in council of Fort St. George, or Bombay, as the case may be; and that the supreme court at Calcutta, or Madras, or the recorder's court at Bombay, as the case may be, shall have the like jurisdiction and power of

interfering by writ of prohibition or mandamus, subject to the same laws, restrictions, and rules of practice, as is or has been exercised by the court of king's bench, in regard to proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts in England; regard being had nevertheless to any special provisions or exceptions contained in the letters patent, and to any other laws and regulations, specially applicable to or concerning His Majesty's territories in the East Indies.

The letters patent then, in the most express terms, save the jurisdiction of the supreme courts of judicature, and recorder's court respectively, so far as it does not appertain to the correction of clerks, or the spiritual superintendence of ecclesiastical persons; and preclude the bishop or archdeacons from any authority or jurisdiction whatever in matters now cognizable in the said courts, except as therein last excepted. And the letters patent further declare, that nothing therein contained shall limit or abridge the power of the governor-general in council, or governors in council of Fort-William, Fort St. George, and Bombay respectively, as to the residence of any person whatsoever within the territories under the government of the company.

Now, according to the sound construction of those letters patent, Sir S. Toller conceived that they by no means warranted the erection of the court in question. For, he argued, it is to be observed, first, that they are altogether silent in regard to any such form of judicature. If they had meant to establish it, its constitution would surely have been minutely and specifically described, with all its incidents. Its officers would have been all enumerated. The supreme court is described with the utmost particularity in the charter of judicature. But the letters patent are so far from comprising any such description of a consistory court, that it is not even mentioned. The only ecclesiastical persons who are therein specified, besides the bishop, are the archdeacons and the registrars of the respective presidencies; and the letters patent are so far from contemplating any addition to the persons thus

auxiliary to the exercise of such ecclesiastical jurisdiction, that they not only declare that each of the archdeacons within his archdeaconry shall be taken to be without further appointment the commissary of the bishop, and shall exercise jurisdiction as such, but with a singular particularity they direct that the person appointed as registrar within the jurisdiction of Calcutta, shall also act as registrar of the commissioners delegate. A provision which strongly indicates a jealousy of such ecclesiastical officers being on any pretence augmented.

Secondly, The letters patent expressly require a deviation from the ordinary course of ecclesiastical judicature in England, by directing (although they ordain the see of Calcutta to be subject and subordinate to the archiepiscopal see of the province of Canterbury) an appeal from the bishop's sentence, immediately to the commissioners delegate; whereas, in England, the appeal from the consistory court is to the archbishop of the province. The letters patent, also, when they ordain that the supreme court shall have the like jurisdiction and power of interference by writ of prohibition or mandamus subject to the same laws, restrictions, and rules of practice, as is or has been exercised by the court of king's bench, in regard to proceedings in the eccelsiastical courts in England, at the same time cautiously direct, as is above stated, that regard should be had to any special provisions or exceptions contained in the letters patent, or to any other laws and regulations specially applicable to or concerning His Majesty's territories in the East Indies; justly considering the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the East Indies as being on a very different foundation from that of England.

Thirdly, The basis for the establishment of such a judicature in India is much too narrow in respect both to the subject matter of it, and to its objects. The letters patent, in the most distinct terms, save the jurisdiction of the supreme court, in all ecclesiastical matters, so far as the same does not appertain to the correction of clerks, or the spiritual superintendence of ecclesiastical persons. The jurisdiction, therefore, of

a consistory court in the East Indies, instead of taking cognizance of the several matters to which the jurisdiction of a consistory court in England extends, would be limited to such correction or spiritual superintendence. And who would be the objects of it? A body of men very inconsiderable in point of numbers, a few chaplains, almost all of whom are military, and under military commands, and therefore the less likely to require the coercion of ecclesiastical authority, independently of the consideration, that men of so sacred a profession, selected and sent out by the court of directors, on the most ample testimonials, in regard to their character and qualifications, can scarcely be contemplated as objects of spiritual censure. A bishop in India will not probably once in a century have to exercise so unpleasant a part of his functions as the pronouncing of such a sentence; and Sir S. Toller observed, that His Lordship's letter to the governor-general in council, dated 29th October, 1818, expressed his hope, that proceedings of that kind would not be frequently called for. Nor was it to be forgotten, that in case of any flagrant breach of professional duty, or of decorum, or of morality, on the part of those chaplains, if it can be supposed to occur, the government is armed with the power of applying a very efficacious and summary remedy; he meant, that of sending them out of the company's territories. A power, which the letters patent have expressly declared shall not be limited or abridged by any thing therein contained.

In regard to the regular keeping of registers to which His Lordship, in his speech on opening the consistory court at Calcutta, alludes, as a benefit to be derived from such a judicature, Sir S. Toller observed, that it is not necessary to erect such a court for such a purpose. It is the special duty of the bishop's registrar to take care of that object.

In respect to the decorous dress of the clergy to which His Lordship on that occasion also referred, which doubtless ought not to be neglected, it may (he supposed) also be effectually enforced, without the erection of a court for the

purpose, as well as their obligation to reside at their stations, and to use the liturgy entire.

It is true that the letters patent ordain that all grave matters of correction which are accustomed, and according to the practice of the ecclesiastical court of England to be judicially examined, the same shall in like manner be judicially examined and proceeded in, before the bishop or his commissary, and all such causes shall be proceeded in to final sentence in due form of law. But Sir S. Toller thought, that, according to the true construction of those words, and taking the whole of the letters patent together, and having, as they express it, "regard to the special provisions and exceptions contained therein, and to other laws and regulations, specially applicable to or concerning His Majesty's territories in the East Indies," the meaning is, that His Lordship, or his commissary, is judicially to examine and decide on such grave matters as are specified in his camera, in his chamber, as an arbitrator, and to publish his award or sentence, like any other arbitrator. He saw no reason why the bishop, or his commissary, might not call before him, in such domestic form, the aforesaid clergy, and enquire, by witnesses upon oath, concerning their morals and behaviour; or why His Lordship's judicial examination and sentence, or that of his commissary, in this mode, should not be as valid and effectual, and why it might not be affirmed to be as much in due form of law, as if all the cumbrous and expensive machinery of the court, then proposed to be established, should be resorted to; for which there does not appear to be any necessity whatever.

Upon the whole matter, Sir S. Toller concluded, that so far from its being obligatory on the Bishop to constitute such a court, His Lordship had no power to do so, according to the true intent and meaning of the instrument, from which his authority was derived.

This opinion threw the Bishop into considerable embarrassment; for about two years before, the advocate-general at Calcutta had declared that His Lordship could not proceed

against any clergyman but in his consistorial courts; one of which was accordingly erected in that city. He was applied to on the present occasion, and still maintained the sentiment which he had formerly expressed; but advised, that as there was such a diversity of opinion, the matter should be settled in England.

Bishop Middleton's care was much increased by the death of Mr. Jones, with whom he had contracted for the building of the college. He could not immediately find a person capable or willing to carry on the engagement, and therefore anticipated much additional expense; a point of the utmost importance in the present instance. At length he found an officer of the engineers, Captain Hutchinson, who, though incapable, by military regulation, of contracting, undertook to carry on the work. This was a great relief to him. But still the business of the bishopric, attended with difficulty, and often with vexation, continually pressed upon his mind; so that, when the fatal blow was given, which occasioned the decease of this excellent man, it fell upon nerves disposed to accelerate its dreadful consequences. On the 8th June, 1822, he wrote to a friend in England, and expressed himself in terms which proved how much the difficulties under which he laboured had operated upon his feelings. He reminded his friend, that it was that day eight years since he embarked at Portsmouth, when Archdeacon Thomas accompanied him to the boat, and was the last of his acquaintance whom he saw in England. "It was exceedingly improbable," he added, "that we should meet again; and, perhaps, all things considered, it was hardly to be expected, though he was the older man, that I should be the survivor: but so the Almighty had ordained it. I sometimes wonder at the manner in which, amidst the continual havoc around me, I have been preserved, and my wife also, without whom, in solitude and destitution, I should be as nothing."

From the most authentic sources of information it appears, that on the Monday preceding his death, the Bishop received

the clergy at dinner, having recently returned to his own house, which had been long under repair. And, except that he was much agitated in the early part of the evening, by information respecting a very improper proceeding of one of his clergy, he was unusually cheerful and animated.

The next day he went down to the college at an early hour in the afternoon; from which his physician, who happened to be in the house in attendance on Mrs. Middleton, endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. He promised, indeed, that he would not go again at so early an hour. Little did he think that he was visiting that favourite spot for the last time!

On Wednesday, he was occupied during eight hours in writing to government, on the subject of a suit in the supreme court; and, at length, declared himself quite exhausted; but proposed to Mrs. Middleton, who, from ill health, had not been out for several days, that she should accompany him in the carriage before the sun was gone down.

They had not proceeded far, when, at a turn in the road, the descending sun, which is always dangerous, and especially at the damp season of the year, shone full upon him. A slight cause from without, added to the present agitated state of his nerves, was sufficient to produce serious effects. The Bishop immediately declared that he was struck by the sun, and returned home; but refused to receive medical advice, and took what was offered him by Mrs. Middleton. When he retired to rest, symptoms of fever, and irritability of mind, increased. On the following night he was with difficulty restrained from rising and pursuing the business that pressed upon his attention.

On the Thursday, the fever had increased so much that he wrote to his physician, Dr. Nicolson, a person in whom he had implicit and well-grounded confidence. The Bishop now indeed appeared sensible of the extent of his disorder, and said that he thought himself seriously ill, and knew not what would be the consequence. He sent a letter to his chaplain, to desire that he would take his place in the pulpit

at the cathedral on the Sunday. But neither in this, nor in any other communication to his friends, was there any intimation of the extreme illness which now oppressed him. They were unconscious of the dreadful event which awaited them till two hours before he expired. The archdeacon, the senior chaplain, Mr. Trotter, whom the Bishop had distinguished by his friendship, Mr. Hawtayne, and the physician were with him. He lay for some time exhausted by the violence of the disorder, and breathing violently, till just before his departure, when an expressive smile spread itself over his features. So tranquil was the last moment, that it was not marked by a single motion.

Thus expired Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, at eleven o'clock, on the night of Monday the 8th July, 1822, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and ninth of his consecration, to the great loss of the Christian church.

The death of this excellent prelate was announced by a government gazette extraordinary, issued by the Governor-General in council; a marked testimony of respect, expressed in terms [1] no less honourable to the feelings of the council, than just to the character of the deceased. The last offices were performed [2] over the remains of Bishop Middleton on Friday the 12th July, amidst the lamentations of all ranks of society; and on the following Sunday, a funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Loring, archdeacon of Calcutta.

Anxious to show respect to the memory of their departed Bishop, the archdeacon of Calcutta and other clergy, immediately after his decease, resolved to enter into a subscription for a monument, to be erected to his memory in the cathedral. This was followed by Archdeacon Barnes, and other friends, as soon as the information of the afflicting loss which the church had sustained, had reached Bombay. And at a special meeting of the diocesan committee, held at Calcutta on the 24th July, 1822, W. B. Bayley, Esq. proposed resolutions to the members present, for a subscription towards the in-

[1] See the Appendix. [2] See the Appendix.

tended monument, in a speech expressing the highest veneration and regard for the virtues of the late Bishop; which was followed by the unanimous adoption of the measure. Similar resolutions were passed by the diocesan committee at Madras; which were moved by the Hon. Sir Charles Grey, knt., in an address, bearing testimony to the esteem in which the memory of Bishop Middleton was held in that presidency.

No sooner was the sad event known in England, than the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge [1] passed resolutions in honour of his memory; and for the purpose of entering into a subscription for a monument, to be erected in the cathedral of St. Paul.

Thus, beloved abroad and at home, departed the subject of these memoirs. It remains that they be closed with an account of his person and disposition.

In person, Bishop Middleton was above the ordinary stature of man; strongly formed; of a florid and commanding countenance; animated and energetic in his manner. In disposition, he was sanguine and zealous; ambitious of distinguishing himself amongst the wise and good; warm and generous to his friends; placable and benevolent towards all men; unbending in his principles, but charitable to those who differed from him in opinion. As a husband, he was affectionate and exemplary. As a prelate, he was apostolic in his views, vigilant in his government, and anxious for the diffusion of the gospel, even unto death.

It is much to be lamented, that in his last will [2], dated 19th January 1821, he ordered all his manuscripts to be de-

[1] See the Appendix.

[2] The will expressed, that all his sermons and other writings in MS. should be forthwith burnt. That there were some of them, which, if Providence spared his life, he was disposed to revise for the press; but in their then state, the best of them were very unfit for publication. It was, therefore, his earnest wish that none of these should be preserved; and that his executrix (Mrs. Middleton) would consider a strict compliance with this injunction to be due to his memory.

The following inscription written by him, and considered by its author one of the best of his productions in this kind, is in the Botanic Garend

stroyed; amongst these were his admirable lectures on the litany, which were ready for the press. Bishop Middleton died without issue, and without any near relations; Mr. Seth Stephen Ward, of the accountant-general's office, already

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near Calcutta, to which I have subjoined a hymn, composed by Bishop Middleton, and always sung on new-year's-day, by his desire: —

INSCRIPTION FOR THE BOTANIC GARDEN.

Quisquis. Ades.
Si. Locus. Suavitate. Mentem. Permulcet.
Aut. Admonet. Ut. Pie. Sentias. De. Deo.
Habendus. In. Honore. Tibi.
Roxburghius.
Horum. Hortorum. Olim. Præfectus.
Vir. Scientiæ. Botanices. Laude. Florens.
Idemque. Amœnitatum. Agrestium.
Summus. Artifex.
Conservat. Cinerem. Patria.
Hic. Viget. Ingenium.
Tu. Fave. Et. Perfruere.
B. M. P. C. Superstites. Amici. A. D. MDCCCXXII.

THE HYMN.

As o'er the past my mem'ry strays,
Why heaves the secret sigh?
'Tis that I mourn departed days,
Still unprepared to die.

The world and worldly things beloved
My anxious thoughts employ'd;
And time unhallow'd, unimproved,
Presents a fearful void.

Yet, Holy Father, wild despair
Chase from my lab'ring breast;
Thy grace it is which prompts the pray'r,
That grace can do the rest.

My life's brief remnant all be thine!
And when thy sure decree
Bids me this fleeting breath resign,
O speed my soul to Thee!

mentioned, a descendant of the maternal grandfather of the Bishop, and the children of Mr. Ward, being the only persons allied to his family who survived him.

The Bishop, in his will, directed that his remains should be interred in the vault under the college chapel, if it were consecrated; and left an inscription to be engraved on a tablet in the chapel. But that edifice not being completed at the time of his death, the following variation of the inscription, left also by himself, in case he should be interred elsewhere, is to supply its place: —

In. hoc. Sacello.[1]
Nomen. meum. servandum. volui.
THOMAS FANSHAW MIDDLETON. S. T. P.
Primus. Diœceseos. Calcuttensis. Episcopus.
Hujusce. Collegii. Ædificandi. Suasor.
Et. pro. viribus. adjutor.
Jesu. Christe.
Lux. mundi. peccatorum. salus.
Præconibus. tuis. hinc. exeuntibus.
Optima. quæque. dona. elargiaris.
Et. miserescas. animæ. meæ.

Obiit. anno. Redemptoris. MDCCCXXII.
Ætatis. LIII.
Episcopatus. IX.
Voluit. ELIZABETHA. uxor. conjunctissima.
Eodem. marmore. insignii.

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[1] If the chapel had been consecrated, and the Bishop's remains interred in it, the inscription was to have run thus: —

Prope hunc locum
Mortales exuvias reponendas volui
&c. &c.

APPENDIX.

An extract from a letter addressed by the Rev. W. H. Mill, Principal of Bishop's College, to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, dated Ajmeer, July 29, 1822.

"Being supplied with letters from His Lordship (the Bishop) to Cochin, and to Archdeacon Barnes, at Bombay, I embarked at the end of October last year, and arrived at the former port in November, with the intention of visiting the Christians of St. Thomas, as they have been very generally called in the interior.

"A church subsisting like theirs, if not from the apostolical age, (a tradition justly suspected,) at least from the ages immediately succeeding, whose members have been recognised as a distinct and respected class of the community, in the very heart of Hinduism, for more than fifteen centuries, is a phenomenon which cannot but claim the attention of every one engaged in the propagation of the Gospel in this country; and is itself a most satisfactory answer to the many who contend, that its permanent reception by any class of respectable natives is an impossibility.

"The Christians of St. Thomas, though evidently Indians themselves in origin, as in complexion and language (which is the Malayalim), have received their orders, with their liturgies and ecclesiastical traditions, from the more ancient parent church in Syria. Accordingly, (notwithstanding the inaccurate later rumours concerning them, which seem with many to have superseded the excellent and laborious accounts of their former history, given by Dr. Michael Geddes, and by La Croze,) they resemble, in their form of government, every other ancient church of which we have any knowledge, by which Christianity has been planted in the midst of idolaters: neither in the *three* orders (to which they have superadded many of confessedly inferior authority) do they differ from the Western church, except that the

deacons exercise fewer of the proper functions of the Catanars or Presbyters, than custom has allowed them among us. It were happy, if with this apostolical regimen, of which they are most carefully tenacious, they had preserved uniformly unimpaired the fundamental articles of the Christian faith; but the unhappy disputes respecting the person and natures of our Lord, which beginning with verbal questions, ended with dividing the Oriental churches into two opposite erroneous confessions, have extended their evil influence to the church in Malabar. It is evident, from the accounts that La Croze has detailed with his usual candour and sagacity, that at the time when the Portuguese were forcing the Romish tenets upon them, they were, like the see of Babylon to which they adhered, Nestorian. And it is evident also, that those bishops and priests from Syria, by whose assistance, half a century after, they were enabled, for the greater part, to throw off that usurpation, and recover their ancient ecclesiastical independence, were from the see of Antioch, the most opposed to that heresy, being Jacobites. And this is, accordingly, the creed of all the independent parts of the Syro-Malabaric church at this day, who are under a metropolitan bishop of their own nation. These correspond with the church in Antioch: like them have the anti-catholic *expression* (to say the least) in use, of the two natures forming *one nature*, and unanimously hold the Nestorian duality of persons in the utmost detestation. The other great division of this church, who remain under subjection to the see of Rome, though they have still priests of their own nation, and their liturgy in Syriac, printed at Rome for their use, have all their superior governors sent to them from Europe, and are in a singular state of schism; the Portuguese Archbishop of Cranganore, as suffragan of Goa, still claiming them as his charge, while this right is denied by the Propaganda Society at Rome, who have constantly sent out Italian vicars apostolic, and now latterly, an Irish Bishop, residing at Verapoli, to rule them. These unfortunate churches, still sufficiently proud of their ancient character to feel their present degradation, yet under the terror of the exclusive pretensions to catholicism and infallibility, submit partly to the one, partly to the other, of these opposite claimants.

"It is the former and happier division of this singular people, to whom we look with the greatest interest and hope; as those

whose recovery and rise to their early primitive character will, as we may confidently expect, bring with it the emancipation of the rest. From their venerable Metropolitan, Mar Dionysius, who is exerting himself in various ways for the improvement of his clergy and people, I had the happiness of hearing very warm expressions of respect and attachment to the church of England, and our late regretted Bishop; whose interviews with himself, and mutual presents, he evidently remembered with great satisfaction."

"The persons to whom I was chiefly indebted for my intercourse, both with the priests and laity of this extraordinary people, (of whose Indian language I was ignorant,) were three clergymen of the church of England, resident at Cottayam, in Travancore, and actively employed in superintending the college and the parochial schools; the former of which, by the grant of the heathen government of that country; the latter, by the desire and contribution of these Christians themselves, have been recently established in their community. Singular as such a superintendence may appear, and almost unprecedented, there is nothing in it, as exercised by these clergymen, which opposes the order, either of that episcopal church they visit, or, as far as I am capable of judging, of that to which they themselves belong. For the *former*, they certainly do nothing but by the express sanction of the Metropolitan consulting and employing them: their use of the Anglican service for themselves and families at one of his chapels, is agreeable to the Catholic practice of these Christians (who allowed the same 250 years ago to the Portuguese priests, as to persons rightly and canonically ordained, even while they were resisting their usurpations), and is totally unconnected with any purpose of obtruding even that liturgy upon the Syrian church; while their conduct, with respect to those parts of the Syrian ritual and practice, which all Protestants must condemn, is that of silence, which, without the appearance of approval, leaves it to the gradual influence of the knowledge now disseminating itself to undermine, and, at length, by regular authority to remove them. For the *latter*, which involves the more immediate and far more sacred duty of the two, though no opportunity for the display of this has yet existed in this native government, without the Company's territory, and the limits of the operation of our Indian church establishment hitherto, yet I be-

lieve they fully acknowledge the episcopal relation and jurisdiction to which they, equally with myself, or with any chaplain of the company, are spiritually subject."

"In stating these points respecting the Syro-Indian church, I do little more than repeat what I had before stated, at greater length, to Bishop Middleton; and it is not amongst the least of the losses that I have sustained, from his lamented and unforeseen departure, that I have been deprived of hearing from himself an opinion on these subjects; on some of which he alone was competent to decide, and on all of which his interest in this people, and extensive acquaintance with their concerns, ancient and modern, enabled him to decide so well."

CALCUTTA GOVERNMENT GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY.

Fort William, Wednesday, July 10. 1822.

With sentiments of the deepest concern, the Governor-General in council notifies to the public, the demise, on the night of Monday last, of the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Calcutta.

His Excellency in council, adverting to the unaffected piety, the enlarged benevolence, and the acknowledged moderation of the late Bishop, conceives that he only anticipates the eager and unanimous feeling of all classes of the Christian inhabitants of this city, when he announces his desire that every practicable degree of respect and veneration should be manifested on this most distressing occasion to the memory of this excellent and lamented prelate.

His Excellency in council is pleased, therefore, to request, that the principal officers of government, both civil and military, will attend at the melancholy ceremony of the Bishop's interment; and that every other public demonstration of attention and respect, consistent with the occasion, be observed on the day appointed for the funeral.

By command of His Excellency
The Most Noble the Governor-General in council,
C. LUSHINGTON,
Acting Chief Secretary to the Government.

The following account of the ceremony which took place at the funeral of Bishop Middleton was printed in one of the Calcutta papers.

Friday evening (July 12, 1822) having been fixed upon for the solemnity of the funeral of our late respected Diocesan, the day was spent in making such preparations as would be suited to the dignity of the illustrious dead, and, at the same time, consistent with that decent plainness, which it was his own desire should be observed on the occasion.

The honourable and gratifying tribute of respect and regret which the government had been pleased to afford by the publication of the Extraordinary Gazette, was followed by other demonstrations of the high sense entertained by them of the character of the late Bishop. The flag at Fort William was hung half-mast high during the whole day. About six o'clock, the leaden coffin having been screwed into the outer case, which was covered with rich black velvet, handsomely finished with gilt ornaments, was removed into the hearse. At twenty minutes before seven, the procession moved from Chowringhee, consisting of the hearse, attended by the mutes and plume-bearers, and followed by the late Bishop's carriage; and five mourning coaches, containing the clergy, the pall-bearers, mourners, &c. with a numerous train of the carriages of the principal inhabitants of Calcutta; while minute guns were discharged from the ramparts of Fort William from the moment of the departure of the procession until it reached the cathedral. Here the hearse and coaches drew up within the church-yard, in order to allow space for forming the procession.

The entrance of the procession into the church, which was handsomely hung with black, and lighted, was marked by a solemn dirge from the organ. The proper psalm was read by the Archdeacon, and the lesson by Mr. Corrie; after which was sung an anthem from Handel: — "When the ear heard Him, then it blessed Him; and when the eye saw Him, it gave witness to Him. His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth evermore." The body was then lowered into the grave, within[1] the communion rails, while the Archdeacon concluded the solemn service.

[1] Bishop Middleton was the first person interred in the cathedral, by the special permission of the government.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

Bartlett's Buildings, 16th December, 1822.

At a very numerous meeting of members of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, convened for the purpose of considering what measures it might be proper for the Society to adopt, on occasion of the lamented death of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta;—

The Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London in the Chair;

The following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to:

"That this Board having received, with feelings of the deepest regret, intelligence of the death of the Right Reverend Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D. Lord Bishop of Calcutta, do sincerely deplore the sudden termination of that long and intimate connexion, which subsisted between His Lordship and the Society.

"That this Board feel it their duty thus publicly to express their lively sense of that rare union of wisdom, activity, and firmness, which marked the character of the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta, and qualified him, in an eminent degree, to accomplish the arduous undertaking of establishing in the East a branch of the apostolical church of England; an undertaking, which, under his prudent and energetic management, was in the most promising state of advancement; but the completion of which, under the divine blessing, must be looked for from a similar combination of talent and piety in those who may hereafter be called to the exercise of episcopal functions in India.

"That this Board, recollecting the solemn and affecting address, in which the Bishop, upon the eve of his departure for India, took leave of the Society, and adverting to the pledge which he then gave, of promoting to the utmost of his power the objects of the Society, within the sphere of his spiritual influence, are desirous of expressing their grateful sense of the zealous and effectual manner in which that pledge has been redeemed.

" That with a view to a more durable expression of the esteem and regret of this Board, measures be taken for the erection of a monument to the memory of the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta, in the cathedral church of St. Paul; the expence to be defrayed by the individual subscriptions of members of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; and that books be forthwith opened at the Society's office, and with the secretaries of the diocesan and district committees, for receiving the names of subscribers.

" That this Board feel a melancholy satisfaction in adopting a suggestion made by the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta, in his last letter to the Society, relative to the foundation of five scholarships in Bishop's College at Calcutta; and accordingly agree to place the sum of 6000*l.* at the disposal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, for the purpose of endowing five scholarships, besides affording a salary for a Tamul teacher, in the same college, with such reference to the sons of the missionaries of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, as the statutes of the college may allow; and that this Board, anxious that the piety and zeal of the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta should be honoured with an appropriate memorial in the country, where they were most conspicuously and beneficially displayed, do recommend that the said scholarships be founded, and henceforth called by the name of Bishop Middleton's scholarships.

" That this Board, having a well-grounded confidence that the venerable Archdeacon Loring will, during the vacancy in the see of Calcutta, use his best endeavours to promote the several important designs for the advancement of Christian knowledge in the East, which occupied so large a portion of the late Bishop's time and solicitude, do invite the Archdeacon to enter into a correspondence with the Society; and do assure him, that any suggestions which he may think proper to offer, in furtherance of those designs, will obtain the Society's most favourable consideration.

" That, as a mark of the high esteem entertained by this Board for the character and virtues of the widow of the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta, a copy of the resolutions adopted at this Special General Meeting of the Society, handsomely written on vellum, be presented to Mrs. Middleton, immediately after her arrival in England.

" That a committee, consisting of nine members of the Society, viz. The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, (president); The Lord Bishop of London; The Lord Bishop of Llandaff, (dean of

St. Paul's); Lord Kenyon; the Archdeacons of London, Middlesex, and Colchester; Dr. D'Oyly, and Joshua Watson, Esq., be appointed to superintend the erection of the monument, and to take all such steps as may be necessary for carrying the resolutions of this meeting into effect.

"That the contributions towards the erection of the monument be limited to the amount of each member's annual subscription to the Society.

"That the resolutions adopted by the Board at this special meeting of the Society be published, under the direction of the committee.

"Agreed unanimously, that the thanks of this meeting be given to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London, for having taken the chair; and for the very obliging manner in which he has conducted the business of the day."

December 27, 1822.

At a second Special General Meeting, convened for the purpose of receiving and taking into consideration an application from the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, "for permission to co-operate with the members of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in the erection of a monument to the memory of the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta in the cathedral church of St. Paul, and thus to perpetuate their feelings of gratitude for his services, and admiration of his talents;"

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury in the Chair;

The following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to:

"That this Board gladly acknowledge the cordial union that has so long and so happily subsisted between the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in as much as the two Societies arose from the same stock, were founded on the same principles, and act under the same president.

"That this Board, therefore, however anxious they may have been to reserve to the members of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the honour of offering a suitable tribute to the memory of the late Lord Bishop of Calcutta, cannot resist the earnest request that has now been made by the sister Society.

to be permitted to co-operate with them in the erection of the monument proposed to be placed in the cathedral church of St. Paul.

"That two members of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, viz. the Rev. H. H. Norris and the Rev. J. Lonsdale, be added to the special committee which has been appointed to carry this design into execution.

"That the Archdeacon of London be requested to furnish the Board with a copy of the admirable address delivered by him at the last Special General Meeting, for the uses of the Society.

"Agreed unanimously, that the cordial and respectful thanks of the meeting be offered to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, for presiding on this occasion.

"GEO. GASKIN, D.D.
"Secretary."

The Archdeacon of London's Address to the Board of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, on moving the Resolutions for the Society's adoption, on occasion of the lamented death of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta.

"My Lord,

"Having had the honour to fill the chair of your committee, when we were called to deliberate upon a subject of so much general concern, and of such special interest to this Society, I should not discharge what is due to that committee, if I did not, in moving their resolutions, endeavour to express the common feeling of those delegated members. They have, indeed, made this declaration in a way entirely proper and becoming in the minutes which were framed at that time, and which will now be submitted to Your Lordship and to this Board. They have rendered thus a cordial testimony of respect, esteem, and admiration; of regret and affliction for the loss sustained, and of the strong desire which is felt, I may safely say, by every member of this Society, to offer a suitable and lasting tribute to the memory of one who was so highly valued, and is now so much lamented.

"Your committee, indeed, approached the subject, as they would have gathered round the honoured bier of him to whom their thoughts were directed, if his native land, and the train and attendance of his nearest friends, had been the scene allotted for his funeral obsequies; and standing now in this room, where I have so often heard him lend his voice to our counsels, and where he gave the last assurances of co-operation with the views of the Society, which were conformable, in all respects, with his own, I

may be permitted, from my own experience, to say a word which may borrow its excuse from feelings which I find it difficult, at this moment, to control.

"It cannot be needful for me to remind Your Lordship, whose vigilant attention is never wanting to promote the influence, and to aid and direct the deliberations of this Board, that the Society enjoyed, in an eminent degree, the confidence of the distinguished prelate, of whom I now speak, and whose image fills my mind. But there were those who had still nearer opportunites, from habits of familiar intercourse, to learn the sentiments and motives which, under Providence, induced him to accept a charge which could not fail to expose him to more than an ordinary measure of the risks and difficulties to which the devoted servant of Christ Jesus stands bound in every case.

"There are not many who had better opportunities than I had, on the eve of his departure from us, for collecting from his own mouth the prompt expression of his thoughts. There is one who had a closer intimacy with him, and deserved it more, — your excellent treasurer, now present, to whom the public owes more than it can ever repay, except by continuing to be the object of those services which carry with them their own recompence, in the benefits which they produce; and to him I can appeal, were it needful now to put the question, whether he has ever witnessed purer motives operating in the mind of any man, than those which swayed the resolutions of his friend, and determined him to count all things little in this life, in comparison with the charge which was devolved upon him.

"I do not pretend to say that there have not been those whose zeal may have induced them to make more violent and extraordinary sacrifices in the same cause; but I confess that I am not disposed to measure zeal itself, as it should lead to the best degrees of wisdom, virtue, and well-doing, by the single standard of a voluntary sacrifice. If I did, I might be led to place the pattern of a Loyola above that of him whose zeal kept pace at all times with its occasions, and prompted him to employ the fittest methods for accomplishing the best designs.

"I have heard him say, in the warm effusion of his heart, that he had revolved the subject which had been placed before him by the wishes of those who, with so much judgment, selected him for this charge, and that having, without eagerness of mind, or overweening confidence, surveyed the matter on all sides, and having lent an ear to the call, he thought that it remained for him to cast every care behind him, and to address himself with an

humble trust in the good providence of Almighty God to the work to which he was appointed.

"I had occasion to see something of the course of study in which he was then occupied, which was various in its objects, but directed to one end. I had often felt the power and energy of his comprehensive mind, the compass and sagacity of which have since been so signally displayed; and I may, I hope, be allowed to say, that the church of England, by the care of those who preside in it, with whose advice and approbation we must all feel convinced that the new-formed diocese received its first appointed pastor, discharged a weighty trust with singular discretion. If the guides and rulers of our apostolical church, and all in her communion, felt the common wish to set the first pattern of episcopal government in a suitable manner in that distant land, which has of late years proved a field for the display of various talents above most others — if such were the purpose, as indeed it must have been, I do not doubt that the voice of those whom I have now the honour to address will concur with me in declaring that the purpose was effected; that the choice was well and wisely exercised, and that the consequences have been answerable, fulfilling every pledge that had been given, and crowning every hopeful expectation which was raised. I am quite sure, likewise, that we must all feel, that the resolutions which are now about to be proposed to Your Lordship and the Board for your adoption, will mark at once the great importance of the seat now vacant, and will describe the same solicitude with reference to its further supply, that what has been so happily begun, may be as successfully pursued. The tribute which is to be rendered to the memory of one who so faithfully discharged an arduous duty, will thus become a source of further benefit, whilst it contributes, in some measure, to perpetuate his name; until they who share with him in their respective stations, and in their proportion in the service of the same Lord, shall enter with him into the joy and kingdom of that Lord."

Upon its being resolved at a subsequent meeting, that the Archdeacon of London be requested to furnish the Society with a copy of the preceding address; and upon such resolution being communicated to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury, then in the chair, the Archdeacon replied in the following terms: —

"I cannot feel myself at liberty to withhold my compliance where the commands of Your Grace, and the wishes of this

Board, are signified; although I must confess I have since thought, on recalling what was spoken by me on a former day in moving the resolutions of the committee, that what was said was many ways defective. If it had any claim to attention from the Board, it could not be for what was generally known and felt concerning one so excellent; but from what I had it in my power to state, from the private intercourse of domestic friendship, in which the inclinations of the mind and thoughts appear most readily, and are expressed without reserve. I can never cease to retain the full effect of one such conversation, though I am well aware that I could not convey to the minds of others, those impressions which remain so deeply fixed upon my own. I could not describe the manner, tone, and spirit, with which those spontaneous feelings were then marked. They will never be effaced from my remembrance.

"But in one respect I have had occasion, on reflection, to tax myself with an omission, when the opportunity was offered, which was quite unpardonable. My mind was so carried away with the deep sense of regret which I felt, and which was shared by all around me, that I omitted what should have been offered on the score of consolation.

"It is, then, to the public services of that excellent prelate, so far as they have been accomplished, that we must look for the grounds of consolation. He who put his hand to the plough, never once removed it, never once looked back, unless it were for aids and succours from this quarter: and we have the satisfaction to reflect, that they were never wanting on the part of this Society. The good effects have followed. I will not detain Your Grace and the Board further than to say, that indeed the services effected were worth the life of any man, however highly valued, however dear to others, and whatever, under other circumstances, might have been the term of its duration."

Although the injunction laid by the Board is thus fulfilled, and any word that can be added must want that sanction, and require apology as a freedom not commonly permitted, yet, in returning this sheet to the press, it is impossible to disguise the sense of its inadequacy; and more particularly, as no thought existed of the address surviving the occasion by which it was produced.

It must now remain for others to trace, more ably and distinctly, the several stages of that prosperous and well finished course, which took its commencement from the bosom of this

country, and its central city, in which the distinguished prelate, the subject of this short address, had his early and successful culture; and where he exhibited the first earnests of his genius, his great capacity for every good attainment, and his blameless conduct.

It will remain for others to trace the rising strength of his encreasing years and more mature acquirements, to the rank which he obtained in the church, in whose ministries and service every effort of his mind and soul was so happily expended.

It will remain for others to follow him with an heedful eye to a distant and far-severed clime, where every generous quality of his cultivated mind, and each particular of his rich attainments, found their full scope, and were displayed with such large results of solid benefit and permanent esteem.

It will remain for others to track his progress through long leagues of travel, both by land and sea, in his several visits to remoter parts of his extensive diocese; and to contemplate him in the fixed scene and circle of his customary residence and unremitting pains.

They will behold him forming, at once, and with the outline and the true proportions of a master's hand, the noble plan of a college, which may from henceforth be regarded as the seed-plot of every good and profitable plant which may be trained, and fitted, and set out in the soil in which they are to flourish through succeeding generations. They will observe him forming, with equal skill and foresight, the statutes for that great establishment; which may thus appear to have sprung up almost at the first step placed in India by one who was soon to pass to an everlasting mansion, but whose temporary labours were thus calculated for endurance, even on this transitory globe.

One thing, however, remains yet for the mover of the resolutions here alluded to; and before this sheet, which must not tarry for enlargement, returns to the hand which must give it to the public, it may furnish some amends for what is here defective and inadequate, to express an earnest hope, that the last transmitted fruits of an enlightened mind and solid judgment, the two concluding charges delivered by the Bishop to his clergy, may find a more general circulation, by multiplied and numerous copies, through his native land. The view presented in those exquisite discourses of the provisions made by the Great Author of our common hope for planting and perpetuating his church, with the steps which followed thereupon in the first ages of the Christian era, and the pattern there drawn of the sacred bond of fellow-

ship and concord; of faith, discipline, and practical proficiency, are calculated, as all his labours were, for the general advantage of the Christian world, and should have as wide a range. Should this suggestion be regarded, and this wish be fulfilled, in any manner, it will compensate for defects in what is thus given to the public; and will establish a more effectual, and a thousand-fold more precious monument to the memory of this exemplary prelate, than that which is so properly projected for him by the two Societies, to which for the best reasons he was so faithfully attached. It will also satisfy the cordial spirit of concern, (more promptly felt than testified,) which served at once both to excite and to restrain expressions, which, at the moment of delivery, could not endure the seal of silence, but which touched with diffidence a subject that surpassed its powers.

St. Martin's Vicarage,
January, 1823.

The following character of Bishop Middleton appeared in the Christian Remembrancer for January and February, 1823.

In no man was there a more singular union of all those various qualities which were each so essential to the success of the first Indian prelate. His mind was naturally ardent and excursive, but it was always under the controul of the most disciplined and calculating discretion. He had a masculine and a practical understanding: he rapidly conceived the most extensive plans, and would digest with facility even their most circumstantial details; but he never anticipated their season, or hurried their execution: he waited with patience, till in the course of passing events a favourable opportunity should arise, and when at last it presented itself, he marked it with decision, and he seized it with effect. So singular, indeed, was his judgment, that amidst the various difficulties with which he was daily and hourly doomed to contend, he never made a step which he was afterwards obliged to recall. His talents and attainments were of a superior order; he was a sound and accurate scholar; and in the prose department of Greek literature he was, perhaps, without a rival. His conversation was vigorous, sometimes even playful; his style was luminous and forcible; not abounding in imagery, but rising perpetually into a manly and a chastened eloquence. As a preacher he was powerful and convincing; his mind was theological, and his expression scriptural.

The leading points, however, in his character, which threw a clearness and a brilliancy over every other, were the singleness of his views, and the simplicity of his heart. In the course of his Indian career he had but one object, — the advancement of the cause of Christianity in the East: to that he dedicated his days and his nights, his hopes and his fears, his money and his influence. Labours so disinterested, and services so pure, were not rejected; the blessing of the Almighty was upon them, and the work of the Gospel prospered in his hand. The prejudices with which at his outset he was overpowered on every side, were rapidly giving way; and during his short residence among them, more was done by his single instrumentality, to prepare the way for the conversion of the heathen, than during the whole previous period of the British dominion in the East.

His notions of duty were strict and severe. He was incapable of casuistry or of excuse; he knew no middle line between right and wrong, truth and falsehood, exertion and neglect. With an income far below the necessary expenses of his station, he stinted only his own comforts and himself. To the call of liberality or of charity he was always open, even to his own distress; insomuch, that after eight years' residence in India, his savings will be found to amount to nothing.

The admiration of his personal character in the East was universal; and this admiration was the more valuable, as it was purchased by no sacrifices either of duty or of principle. Never, in the slightest degree, would he condescend to court popularity: he conducted himself with a conscious and a commanding dignity, and never would he resign any right or privilege which was attached to his station, although he might have converted the resignation into a source of private favour or personal interest. It was his aim to lay the foundations of the Indian church deep in the rock, and to cement them with so much anxiety and caution, as to make the future erection of a superstructure a rapid and an easy task. He was, indeed, a master-builder in the temple of Christ; he built for strength, not for show; for others, not for himself.

His remains were interred on the evening of the 12th of July, within the walls of his own cathedral, with all the solemnity due to his character and station. In ordaining that his ashes should rest in the land of his high and holy exertions, Providence would almost appear to have placed his heavenly mark upon their worth.

He has left no children behind him to lament his loss; but in

the person of his widow, he has left a sacred legacy to his country; a legacy that we trust will be accepted and cherished. Of this amiable and excellent woman the Bishop, in a private letter, spoke in the following affecting words: — "Mrs. Middleton is nearly all that I have to rest upon in India, *particeps omnium consiliorum meorum, et* pro viribus *adjutrix*."

Dear is the name of this great and good man to those that knew him best and loved him most; and precious will his memory be in the sight of those whose hearts are engaged in the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth. — "*His body is buried in peace, but his name liveth for evermore.*" Millions and millions of those who shall hereafter be added to the church of Christ in the regions of the East, shall bless in pious gratitude the memory of him, who was the first and great instrument of the Almighty in their conversion; and among them shall his name be had in honour, till time itself shall be no more.

If there be in heaven, as we believe in humble confidence that there is, an exalted lot for those apostolic men who have sacrificed every tie of kindred and of country to the call of heaven, and have gone forth to plant the church of Christ in distant lands, among these holy spirits shall the great founder of the Indian church be numbered for ever, and in the presence of the Redeemer, enjoy with them the consummation of his everlasting reward.

Dr. Maltby, the learned editor of Morell's Lexicon Græco Prosodiacum, and preacher at Lincoln's-Inn, who was a contemporary and friend of Bishop Middleton at Pembroke Hall, bears this honourable testimony to his character.

"Let me be indulged with permission to add the humble tribute of my own praise to that of the Society, when they appeal to the discretion and zeal of him who has been appointed to the important task of superintending the national church in India. From long and early acquaintance with the character of this learned and excellent prelate, it is gratifying to me to assure you, that the confidence reposed in him will be rewarded by the good and plenteous fruits of faith rooted in knowledge, of pious ardour moderated by benevolence; that the funds you may entrust to his discretion will be wisely and faithfully applied; and that, from the exercise of his diligence and piety, as well as from the influence of his example, the happiest effects may reasonably be expected to that cause, in aid of which I am sure that your hearts are en-

gaged, and that your bounty will liberally flow." — See Sermon for Propagation of the Gospel, in Sermons by E. Maltby, D. D. Vol. ii. p. 297.

Dr. Kaye, Lord Bishop of Bristol, in his sermon, preached before the Society for Propagating the Gospel, adverting to the adverse events which hinder the progress of Christianity in the East, concluded with this testimony of respect for the character of Bishop Middleton.

"To one of those adverse events I feel it now my duty to call your attention; to the unexpected death of the pious and able prelate, to whom the charge of superintending the Indian establishment was committed. To me he was personally unknown; I must, therefore, leave to others the pleasing, though melancholy, task of delineating his private character, and recording his domestic virtues. But his public conduct has been open to general observation; and, assuredly, the tribute of our praise is not more justly due to the wisdom of our rulers, in giving a church establishment to India, than to their judgment in selecting the individual whom they placed at its head. In him appear to have been united all the qualifications requisite for the successful discharge of his high office; a temper at once firm and conciliatory; an ardent yet enlightened zeal; a superiority to passion and prejudice; an entire dedication of his thoughts and exertions to the cause of the Gospel; and, above all, a just sense not only of the arduous nature, but also of the pre-eminent importance and dignity of the work in which he was engaged. He felt that, compared with the object which he was pursuing, the loftiest speculations that can occupy the statesman's mind sink into insignificance. He felt that on him depended the success of the first national attempt to communicate the blessings of Christianity to eighty millions of his fellow creatures; and the consciousness of this awful responsibility, which would have bewildered and overwhelmed a common mind, seemed only to strengthen his resolution and animate his efforts. Stedfastly fixing his eye on the bright reward which would crown the end, he disregarded the difficulties which threatened to oppose the progress of his labour.

In no circumstances of the visible church could the loss of so distinguished a prelate fail to be lamented as a great calamity. How much more severely must it be felt in the case of a new establishment, like that of India! Yet, while we feel the severity of the dispensation, let us not be insensible to the mercy by

which it was tempered. He might have been cut off at an earlier period of his career, when the infant church would have been less able to withstand the shock. Thankful, then, ought we to be that the blow was delayed, till he had in some degree matured his plans; till he had imparted to the new institutions their present consistency and strength; and, what is most important, till by his instruction and example he had rendered others capable of regulating and directing the movements of the vast machine to which he had himself given the primary impulse. Most arduous still will be the duties of him who has succeeded to the superintendence of the Indian diocese, but he will not be compelled to begin the work anew; he will find the foundations of the building already laid; and his only task will be accurately to fill up the plan which has been traced by the commanding genius and skilful hand of his predecessor.

But I will trespass no longer on your patience. In paying this tribute of respect to the memory of the first Protestant bishop of India, I have consulted at once my own feelings, and what I conceived to be the expectation of the audience before whom I stand. To human applause, if it were at any time the object of the deceased prelate's solicitude, he is now no longer sensible; nor do I hope, by any praise which I can bestow, to add lustre to a name, which will be handed down in inseparable connexion with the rise of our ecclesiastical establishment in India, and be pronounced with reverence by multitudes in after times, when that which was but now a small seed, and is still a tender plant, shall become a mighty tree, and all the inhabitants of our Eastern empire shall rejoice beneath its shade.

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THE BLESSING AND THE CURSE

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF NORWICH,

On Thursday, November 29. 1798,

THE DAY OF THE

GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

JOHN BROWNE, ESQ. MAYOR,

THE SHERIFFS,

AND THE ALDERMEN,

OF THE CITY OF NORWICH,

THE FOLLOWING SERMON

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR VERY OBEDIENT AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR

NORWICH.

At a Court of Mayoralty, held the 1st of December, 1798,

Resolved—*That the Thanks of this Court be presented to the Reverend T. F. Middleton for the Sermon preached by him at the Cathedral on Thursday the 29th of November last, being Thanksgiving Day. And in conformity to the unanimous wish of the Mayor, Sheriffs, and Aldermen then present, he is requested to print the same.*

By the Court,

DE HAGUE.

A

SERMON.

THE BLESSING AND THE CURSE.

"*I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing, and cursing: therefore chuse life; that both thou and thy seed may live: that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land, which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.*" — Deut. xxx. 19, 20.

In the former part of these words, the lawgiver proclaims an awful truth, which had a reference to the happiness, not only of his own immediate followers, but of the whole human race. It is true both of men and nations, that they are, in a considerable degree, the authors of their own fortunes. Before individuals at their entrance into the world, and before communities in their political career are set life and death, a blessing and a curse. To both of them prudence and virtue afford a reasonable hope of prosperity; and both of them by folly and depravity, are menaced with ultimate ruin.

It is certain, nevertheless, that not only the natural but the moral world is subject to the agency of disturbing causes. It is these, which in the former sometimes render fallacious our nicest computations, and in the latter disappoint our fairest hopes. Our own good conduct is not always sufficient to ensure our success. In society, men are connected with each other by common interests and endless dependencies. The misconduct, or even the misfortunes of one man may be pregnant with consequences fatal to many; and we can never affirm, that we are secure in the possession of any temporal good, merely because we have used every precaution, which probity and prudence suggest. — If such be the condition of

individuals, still more is it that of communities. Exposed to all the consequences, with which private happiness is threatened, they have not, and they cannot have, the same power of restraining the violence and injustice of each other, which is afforded the individual by the laws. It is essential to their independence, and even to their existence, that they should remain insubordinate among themselves, no less than that their internal subordination should be complete. Societies, therefore, obnoxious to the caprice of their ambitious neighbours, have no tribunal, to which they can appeal; and neither the wisdom nor the moderation of their rulers may be able to rescue them from war, ever calamitous in its progress and doubtful in its issue.

This remark has been strongly exemplified in the history of the last few years. An event has taken place, which has involved the interests, and disturbed the tranquillity of this quarter of the globe. It has given birth to a power, of which ambition has been the master-passion, and destruction the vital principle. The mild philosophic mien, which at first it endeavoured to preserve, was soon ruffled by its innate ferocity: and hypocrisy has at length vanished from the catalogue of its vices. As its object is unexampled in magnitude, so have the measures adopted to ensure its attainment been novel and formidable. Force, which had hitherto executed the decrees of usurpation and tyranny, has been but an inferior engine of its malignity. It has devised a system of policy, calculated to lull into indifference, or to engage in active friendship, the wretch, whom it has doomed to destruction.

It cannot be denied, that the authors of this policy were, in the language of the Gospel, "wise in their generation." It cannot be doubted, that they possessed an extensive acquaintance with mankind, at least with the most corrupt of the species, and a profound insight into the human heart, under the dominion of its worst propensities. With acuteness to avail themselves of every advantage, they discovered that the happiness and independence of nations were accessible by a path untrod before. Superstition, they well knew, had repeatedly been made the instrument of overbearing domination; and men had been often animated to exertion by the generous fervors of mistaken piety: but never had their energies been awakened by an appeal to their criminal

passions, or by an attempt to obliterate their fixed conceptions of good and evil. For this age was it reserved to rise to that tremendous sublimity of wickedness, by which mankind were to be persuaded to divest themselves of religious obligation, to level the mounds of morality, to stifle the admonitions of conscience, and to deride the terrors of a future retribution. It is true, indeed, that atheism and infidelity are by no means of modern growth. A few solitary speculatists have at every period been disposed to scepticism; but never till of late has it been recognized by a legislature, or directed to a political end. But history delights in parallels and contrasts. The valour and enthusiasm of the *middle* ages were turned against the infidels of Palestine: *we* have witnessed an infidel crusade against the liberties and religion of Europe.

To the attentive observers of mankind it was evident, that this singular enterprize would, for a time at least, be crowned with success. It is the weakness of our nature, that they, who cannot be intimidated by threats, may yet be soothed by flattery: and that delusion is often practicable and effectual, where force would be impotent and fruitless. Herein, then, lay the mystery of this political iniquity. It addressed itself to those of every nation, whose characters and habits entitled them to be considered as natural allies, or who could by sophistry be brought to a belief, that their interests were connected with its own. The proselytes, as might be expected, were not few. The uninformed were overcome by the boldness of opinions, whose solidity they could not examine, and whose pretensions to novelty they could not overthrow. The ardour of the young kindled at the prospect of glory and promotion. To blasted ambition was again offered a theatre for the display of its talents. The attention of envy was directed to the affluence and the honours of the rich. The poor felt a generous gratitude to the benevolence which affected to sympathize with their sorrows. The profligate and abandoned, of whatever class, could require no solicitation; and the enchanting sounds of freedom and philosophy had powers of seduction, which almost shook the firmness and integrity of the wise and good. Thus was victory ensured to the armies of a government, which has overwhelmed with ruin a considerable portion of the Christian

world. Whole nations at this hour groan beneath its yoke. The progress of its adherents has every where been marked by rapine, lust, and cruelty; and it has shewn itself the most destructive minister of vengeance, by whom the Almighty ever scourged a guilty world.

But not in the spirit of rancour and revenge do we descant on the crimes of our enemy. The duty, which we are this day called upon to discharge, requires that we should well examine the danger, with which we have been threatened; that we should ascertain its magnitude by its mode of operation; and that we should estimate the value of our deliverance, by a comparison of our own situation with that of others. Ingratitude, odious as it is deservedly accounted, less often proceeds from stupid insensibility or reluctant acknowledgement, than from culpable inattention. The ordinary blessings of Providence pass almost unheeded. They are enjoyed by multitudes in common with ourselves; and they follow each other in continual succession, till the cause is scarcely noticed in the frequency of the effect. It is thus that ingratitude becomes a habit: and its influence sometimes chills the heart, amid the most signal interpositions of Omnipotence. Among these it is, that we ought to number the recent preservation of this island. Placed by nature at the very foot of the volcano, we have been enabled to brave its fury; and our plains still flourish in their wonted exuberance, unhurt by its eruption. There was, indeed, a time, and still it is present to the recollection of most of us, when our political horizon was less bright; when clouds and darkness hovered around us; and the storm, which had burst upon other lands, seemed to bend its course to these shores. The temporary delusion, which has infatuated mankind, had then attained its crisis. It appeared, as if the fountains of opinion had been poisoned, and the bane had vitiated every part of the moral system. Justice began to falter in her decisions; fortitude to shrink from the impending conflict; and piety to droop under the pressure of dismay. But her fears were vain! The Almighty has enabled us to endure the shock; and He, who is faithful, hath not forsaken us in the hour of our distress.

To ascribe an independent efficacy to the agency of second causes, is as little consistent with genuine philosophy, as it is with the very idea of Religion. Piety and wisdom concur in

regarding them but as so many modes of Providence, as means destined to accomplish the purposes of Almighty power. We deny not, that they have been ordained most remarkably to co-operate to our national security. Prudence and tempered firmness have guided the counsels of our sovereign. The great body of the people have unequivocally testified their attachment to the constitution. Legions of our brave citizens are associated in its defence. Our army has spurned at the sophistry which was meant to seduce it from its allegiance. The militia has extended the limits of its stipulated services; and our navy, long since the admiration of the world, has, by the daring genius of its commanders, and the heroism of the seamen, eclipsed the ancient splendour of its own illustrious name. In speaking of its *late* achievements, it is difficult to repress the rising vanity of patriotism, it is difficult to restrain the intemperance of triumph. By them has confidence already been inspired into the powers of Europe; and already have persecution and intolerance assumed a feebler tone. To such manifestations of the Divine favor must our internal security at this hour be attributed. Hence is it, that our laws are still made and executed without foreign intervention; that the wealth of our merchants has been exempted from requisitions; that the labours of the husbandman have been preserved from devastation; that domestic happiness has remained unsullied by the licentiousness of the invader; and that the temples of our religion have not yet been profaned by mockery and folly: — in a word, that we are insulated in our political, as in our geographical situation.

If such, then, have been the mercies vouchsafed to us by the Almighty, we can have no difficulty in ascertaining the nature of the blessing, which is set before these kingdoms. We have been maintained, contrary to human probability, in the possession of whatever is most dear to us, as Christians and as men; and, we trust, we are not guilty of impious presumption, if we conclude, from all we know and feel, that we are a favored people. Yet let not a consciousness of our singular felicity lead us into error. While we yet stand, we should take heed lest we fall. The Israelites had not less cause than ourselves to rely on the Almighty protection. A

blessing was set before them: and yet they chose the curse; and they no longer dwell in the land, which the Lord sware unto their fathers. To imagine, that we are ever authorized to relax our vigilance, is alike to misconceive the moral government of God, and the primary constitution of our nature. It deserves to be remembered, that extraordinary aid, as it is seldom granted us, should in wisdom and humility never be expected: that the ordinary course of Providence is to act by second causes; that these causes in his moral administration are the voluntary actions of mankind: that virtue and happiness are never so secure, but that corrupt passions may effect their fall: that the abuse of our talents, and the neglect of our duty, generally constitute our curse; and that while the Almighty preserves to us the fruits of our exertion, and shields us against the natural effects of those disturbing causes, in the operation of which our own misconduct has had no share, so long are we in the actual enjoyment of the only blessing, for which reason and Revelation permit us to hope. Religion, indeed, considers the Divine favor as the greatest good: but to regard it as appropriated and unalienable, or as superseding the necessity of human efforts, is the character of genuine superstition.

It will become us, therefore, to employ the moment of our success as a season of reflection; and we should anxiously enquire into the nature of the curse, to which our prosperity is obnoxious: in other words, — what are the habits and dispositions, which by their tendency might conduce to our ruin?

Of these, no one would be more destructive than a decline of public spirit. This evil, wherever it generally prevails, is a sure and alarming prognostic. It is, indeed in the life of nations, what old age is in that of man. The same languor, indifference, and imbecility, are the characteristics of them both: in both of them the feelings are not unfrequently absorbed by the same sordid passion; and they both lead inevitably, by an easy descent, to the termination of existence. Far distant, we trust, is our own nation from this awful crisis: it displays the vigour and the warmth of youth; and its general aspect is that of health and longevity. And yet, were we to judge from a few partial instances, we might augur less favourably of its condition.

When men of characters otherwise irreproachable will consent by artifice to evade the debt, which they have contracted with society, it cannot be dissembled, that the appearance is inauspicious. It gives us reason to apprehend, that the period *may* arrive, when the practice shall be common and unregarded; when private dishonesty shall be held more infamous than public frauds; when the burdens of the state can no longer be borne from their unequal distribution; and when avarice shall not hesitate to call perjury to its aid. Of such a people it might safely be pronounced, that their hour was come.

A second evil which might terminate in our destruction, would be a general spirit of wild speculation and political experiment. The present, it is true, is not a period, when this evil is at its height. The torrent which threatened to inundate the social world is beginning to subside and to return to its proper channel. The mischiefs it has already occasioned might, indeed, teach mankind to guard against its rage, and to employ the aid of past experience in checking its future deviations. And yet there is amongst us a class of men, with whom experience passes for nothing. With them, history is not "philosophy teaching by example:" their philosophy disclaims example, and teaches by hypothesis. They invariably reason as if there were every thing to create, and nothing to destroy. It is easy, without doubt, to imagine a situation, in which their conduct would not be unnatural. A party of savages[1] meeting in a desert, and impelled by their common wants to devise some mode of society, might fairly be presumed to enter on the debate without preference or prepossession. But where is the parallel? Surely not in a country, where society has long been established, improved, and refined; where rights have long since been recognized, have been confirmed, and are still protected; where property has effaced every vestige of primæval neutrality; and where the ties of interest are so nicely interwoven and so widely extended

[1] It is not here meant to be conceded, that mankind ever actually existed in what is called the state of nature, a state antecedent to all government whatever. There are many objections to such an opinion: among others, the subsequent origin of government; which is considered by the Bishop of Rochester as "an unphilosophical creation of something out of nothing." It is, however, in such a state only, that we should expect that absolute political apathy, which we sometimes witness.

that no institution can be touched, but that thousands must perish in its ruins.

But to these and other obvious truths is opposed an unceasing clamour against prejudice. This proceeding is formidable; as it is addressed to a passion, which every man feels in some degree, and which is always his most sensitive part. Prejudice implies weakness or folly; a disgraceful imputation, from which vanity revolts. But what is the specific meaning of the term in question? The savage (to revert to the same supposition) who should come to the enquiry already determined in favor of some particular species of polity, of which he had barely heard the name, without knowing any thing whatever of its merits, would exhibit an unexceptionable instance of prejudice. And the case must be strictly limited by these conditions: for if he possessed a knowledge of its excellence, though that knowledge were but inconsiderable, and obtained only from credible report, much more if it were possible, by the nature of the case, to be the result of actual experience, his conduct would no longer deserve the stigma of prejudice, but would be an act of the soundest reason. Neither are *we* prejudiced, if we avow an attachment to those national establishments under which we have for centuries flourished, and may flourish for centuries to come. It is strictly rational to prefer security to danger, certainty to possibility, and possession to hope. It is, however, incalculable what mischief has been effected by unmeaning generalities and insidious ambiguities in terms. In all ages they have been employed by the wicked against the weak, and of late against the good sense of this country with a success, which will justify caution.

Finally, and above all, let us beware of apostacy from that Being, who no less in a political than in a scriptural sense is our life and the length of our days. The distance between the decay of religion and the decline of empires is never great: a general profligacy of manners is the only intermediate step. That morals, indeed, are indispensably requisite to the existence of states is never questioned. Even the legislators of antiquity, who cannot be suspected of excessive refinement, assent to the position. But whether a similar relation subsist between morals and religion is occasionally a subject of dispute. There are those, who would seduce us

from our faith, on the plea, that we need not its aid. They insinuate, that neither was a revelation necessary towards establishing a rule of conduct, nor an appeal to religious hopes and fears towards enforcing its observance. Their known dogma, that "virtue is nothing more than self-interest well understood," deserves to be considered.

Whatever professes to render simple that which was hitherto thought complex and abstruse, will always be favourably received, and often without sufficient examination of its tendency. Of this kind is the principle now before us. Strictly true in itself, it is calculated to mislead, because the abuse of it is far more easy and obvious than the use. To apply it, indeed, as it ought to be applied, is hardly the intent of those who refer to it: for so understood, it is nothing else than a recognition of the design and utility of the Christian dispensation. Christianity is an appeal to the real and most important interests of mankind: and, undoubtedly, he who obeys its precepts, is not, either in a spiritual or a temporal view, chargeable with the neglect of his own well-being. But since this maxim is most frequently resorted to by those, whose object is any thing rather than to recommend the Christian faith, it must evidently be otherwise interpreted: and, indeed, it is liable to a very different construction. With an air of accuracy, it requires that interest should be "well understood;" and yet the great question, whether he best understands his interest, who regards immediate or distant good, is passed over in cautious silence. It intimates, however, that the nature of virtue is very easily ascertained, being not less so, than that of self-interest; of which few persons, if any, believe themselves ignorant. It will be concluded, therefore, that virtue is only the result of that plain good sense, which is daily exerted in the business of life; and hence every man's judgment, whatever it may be, will become the rule of conduct, by which he is to be directed in his intercourse with society. But the rule of life, whencesoever derived, should possess the following recommendations. It should be plain, because it is intended more especially for the use of those who are least qualified for abstract enquiry. It should be impartial, so as not to favor corrupt propensities; for then it would fail, where it most was wanted. It should also be universal: for else, mankind would have no

common standard, to which they could have recourse, and life would be embroiled in endless disputation. Lastly, it should be sanctioned by the highest authority; because nothing short of that authority has any claim to regard, in a question of the highest importance. But the rule of life meant to be established by referring every man to his private judgment, would be defective in each of these particulars. It would not be plain, because it would lead him through a labyrinth of metaphysical deductions, before it could be found, even if he should find it at last. It would not be impartial; because impartiality is rarely attainable, where passion interferes. It would not be universal; on the contrary, of several enquirers scarcely two would arrive at the same conclusion. And it would by no means be authoritative, possessing no higher sanction, than that of the weakness and fallibility of man. Let Revelation be tried by the same criteria: — it is impossible not to anticipate the contrast.

The definition, however, was obliged to admit, that self-interest is not always "well understood:" a concession, of which the consequences are extremely important to the cause of Christianity. For whence does this misunderstanding arise? Immediate interest is in general perfectly well understood; and it cannot be urged, that we are indifferent to its call. It appears, then, that to ascertain immediate advantage is not the whole which is required; and remote consequences must be taken into the account, if we wish to attain to virtue. Religion asks no more. For on what conviction, on what security will men be persuaded to endure the penance of self-denial, to resist the solicitations of desire, to relinquish opportunities, which may never return, of possessing whatever excites the wish of avarice or ambition? On any other belief, than that a future state awaits us, attended with the consequences recorded in the Gospel, forbearance would be weakness, and abstinence were folly: "to-morrow we die."

For this reason, philosophy abstracted from religion is of little or no use in the regulation of human conduct. Men do not act upon half-principles. The will must be absolutely determined: the bias must be decisive. But such a bias can never be communicated except through the medium of our hopes and fears. Reason is but one of the avenues to the heart; and that, perhaps, the longest, the narrowest, and

most difficult of approach: and even he, who has gained admittance by this avenue, must still work on our hopes and fears, if he would influence the will. He would otherwise betray the cause, for which he is an advocate, by using feeble persuasives, when stronger are within his power: a species of treachery the more fatal to the interests of virtue, inasmuch as it is never practised by the advocates of vice.

But after all, what is the real and ultimate design of those who would establish a rule of life unconnected with Christianity? They are not so absurd as to contend, that morals would be *advanced* by being rendered independent of the sanctions of religion: they profess only to expect, that morality would be practised just as it is at present. But is this an object likely to be pursued with so much warmth? For of all men, infidels are the most zealous: is this the source of so much ardour and so much industry? It cannot be: reason forbids it: every effect has its cause: every action has its motive; and theirs is left to our conjecture. The task, perhaps, is not arduous. It was justly remarked in another country, "If you wish to accomplish a revolution, you must begin by the overthrow of the Catholic faith."[1]

To conclude, then, let us advert to the condition, in which Providence has been pleased to place the people of this island. A blessing is set before us; and we feel its benign effects. A curse likewise hangs over us; though the period of its fall, we trust, is far remote. Even now does the Sovereign Disposer of events seem graciously to withdraw from us its menacing form. Yet let us not forget that grace acts not by compulsion; but that the will is free: and that if by selfishness, folly, or impiety, we once renounce the blessing, it may be vain to deprecate the curse.

[1] "*Si vous voulez une Révolution, il faut* DECATHOLISER *la France.*" MIRABEAU. It can hardly be contended, that this was meant only against the errors of Popery: Mirabeau has no pretension to be classed with Luther or Calvin

CHRIST DIVIDED:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

THE TRIENNIAL VISITATION

OF THE

LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

AT GRANTHAM, IN JUNE, 1809.

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

GEORGE, LORD BISHOP OF LINCOLN,

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING SERMON,

PUBLISHED

WITH THE SANCTION OF HIS LORDSHIP'S APPROBATION,
AND AT THE REQUEST OF THE CLERGY PRESENT,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

HIS LORDSHIP'S

MUCH OBLIGED

AND VERY DUTIFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

Tansor Parsonage,
March 27. 1810.

CHRIST DIVIDED:

A

VISITATION SERMON, &c.

Is Christ divided? — 1 Cor. i. 13.

THEY, who have examined the venerable remains of the early Christian writers, must have noticed expressions maintaining the unity of the church, and condemning those who denied it in their teaching, or impaired it by their practice. We find Ignatius enjoining the Magnesians, "Let there be nothing among you, which may give rise to divisions, but be united to your Bishop, being subject to God through him in Christ."[1] Clement of Alexandria observes, "The excellence of the Church, as being the principle of conjunction, consists in her unity[2]:" and Cyprian, in a treatise written expressly on the subject, asks, "Does he, who holds not the unity of the Church, believe that he retains the faith?"[3] The Church he elsewhere defines to be "a people united to their Bishop, and a flock adhering to their Pastor."[4]

Modern times, however, in this as in other instances, have introduced laxer habits of thinking; and a duty, on which in the better days of the gospel such stress was laid, is either altogether disregarded, or considered as of inferior obligation. Separation from the Church is placed on the footing of things indifferent, in which every one may yield to the dictates of his own humour, or is viewed without any of the scruples arising from the consciousness of violating a positive command.[5]

[1] Vid. Cotelerii Pat. apost. vol. ii. p. 58.
[2] Stromat. lib. vii.
[3] De Unitate Ecclesiæ.
[4] Epist. 69. Edit. Fell.

[5] Above a century ago, in the controversy between the Church and the Dissenters, it was admitted on both sides, that Schism is a damnable sin; and that it consists in separating from a Church, which imposes no unlawful terms of Lay Communion. These concessions seem not to be any longer recognized, though they have not been formally retracted.

My text is one of many passages of the New Testament, which condemn the then nascent schisms of the Church, or explain and enforce the duty of unity. St. Paul in the same epistle, observes, that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit[1]:" thus clearly asserting the unity of the Church arising from the same baptism of its members, and preserved by their all holding communion in the sacrament of Christ's blood. The first mention of the infant Church in the second chapter of the Acts is to the same purport: the converts, already spoken of as having been baptized, "continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers."[2] In the epistle to the Ephesians we are told, that Christians have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism[3];" and the Apostle had exhorted his readers "to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."[4] To the same purport is that prayer of our Saviour, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe, that thou hast sent me."[5]

We have here, then, a duty founded on the authority of Christ and the Apostles: but a question may arise as to the nature and limits of Christian liberty, and what extent of meaning may be conceded to the term Church. Even so early as the time of the Apostles, we read of various Churches, as the Church of Jerusalem, of Ephesus, of Antioch, and others: whence it is manifest, that there may be as many Churches of Christ, as there are distinct nations and districts in the Christian world. We read, indeed, of very small congregations privately assembled being so denominated, as the Church in the house of Nymphas, and elsewhere; and hence some would infer, that the name may be applied to every assembly of professing Christians among ourselves: they allege, that the term has nothing in it exclusive, meaning simply a Christian congregation: but they do not observe, or studiously overlook, the obvious difference in the case of

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [2] Acts ii. 42. [3] Eph. iv. 5.
[4] Eph. iv. 3. [5] St. John, xvii. 20, 21.

persons assembled together in private devotion, but holding communion with the great body of Christians, and even receiving the greeting of the Apostles[1], and in that of others, who fly to the conventicle, because they abhor both us and our doctrine. In short, all pretences of professing Christians, that they are members of a church, with which they pertinaciously refuse communion, are futile and absurd[2]: the ends proposed by Almighty Wisdom in having a visible church on earth, can be furthered only by its visible members; and as the power of discerning spirits no longer exists, they only can be known to be its members, who are so in outward acts. The scriptural notion of the church is, that it is *one*, having, indeed, many branches, which are separated by distance of place, but not by discordancy of doctrine, or breach of charity.[3]

Hence it is evident, that national churches legitimately constituted are branches of the one true church of Christ; and that to separate from the church to which we properly belong, while its sacraments are duly administered, and while it engrafts not on the pure word of God the traditions and corruptions of men, is to renounce the church in its full and primitive acceptation. A Christian, who should be converted to Judaism or to the religion of Mohammed, so far as respects the question of separation, could only withdraw from his particular church: I do not say, that he would not recede further

[1] Col. iv. 15.

[2] Neither against the Novatians in the third century, nor the Donatists in the fourth, was heterodoxy alleged, even by their adversaries; they adhered to Episcopacy and the received creed; yet on different grounds, the one from affectation of greater austerity, the other on pretence of informality in the appointment of a Bishop, they refused to hold communion with the Church: they have, therefore, uniformly been deemed Schismatics, in every age of Christianity.

[3] This truth is enforced by Cyprian with so much variety and beauty of illustration, that I translate the passage. "The Church is but one, though with continually increasing fecundity she become a multitude: so the rays of the sun are many; yet is there but one light: the branches of a tree are many; yet hath it but one strength founded on the tenacity of the same root: or though many streams issue from one fountain, and being plentifully fed diffuse their waters far and wide, yet is unity preserved in their source. Pluck a ray from the body of the sun, its unity admits not the severance of light; break a bough from the tree, it will no longer put forth shoots; cut off a stream from its source, and it will presently dry up: so the Church scatters its divine radiance through the whole world, yet is there but one Light, which penetrates every where; nor is the unity of her body divided: in luxuriance of growth she stretches her branches over the earth, she expands more widely her copiously flowing streams; yet is there but one head, one source, one mother rich in the succession of her progeny." De Unitate Ecclesiæ, p. 108.

from the truth, than does the professor of the worst perversion of Christianity: I contend only, that the separation from the visible church of Christ is, in either case, complete. This remark, however obvious, becomes important, when there exists a disposition to distinguish between the church of Christ, and that which has the sanction of the civil government; when we hear men speaking of the established religion of their country, as if it were a political institution, and as if its doctrines and discipline were human inventions, deriving their validity from the legislature. With such prepossessions men introduce into the question of conformity doubts and difficulties, with which it has no concern. We desire, then, that the case may be distinctly stated, and as distinctly understood: we desire it to be recollected, what is the nature of the connexion between the national religion and the national government, which is sometimes so grossly misapprehended. Is there, we may ask, a single dogma of our church, we will not say originating in this connexion, but which it at all modifies or affects? Is our liturgy framed with any reference to the system of civil government?[1] Or has any doctrine of the gospel been rejected from the articles or formularies of our church, as being deemed unfavourable to the views and interests of the secular power? We believe that nothing of this kind is seriously alleged; and that, on strict inquiry, this suspected connexion must be resolved into the encouragement and patronage, which the state affords to a system of faith built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.[2] To the ministers of this faith it secures a maintenance not depending on popular caprice or popular indifference: it holds out inducements to an order of men to devote themselves wholly to sacred studies and duties: it gives dignity and lustre to a profession, from the contempt of which religion itself would suffer: it endeavours to promote an uniformity of doctrine and worship, with its consequences, peace and charity: while it tolerates the wildest dreams of phrensy, it distinguishes with its favour the professors of tried and approved

[1] A cavil is sometimes directed against our praying for the Royal Family, the Nobility, and the Magistracy; but we may confidently refer the objector, among other passages, to 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. reminding him, that this epistle was written, when the world was under the dominion of *Nero*.

[2] Eph. ii. 20.

tenets: and, in some measure, it incorporates the laws of Christianity with the law of the land. In all this we perceive not any thing which can excite mistrust, unless in those, in whom piety is a weaker principle than political prejudice, and who are ready to withdraw their reverence from divine ordinances, when confirmed and aided by the authority of man.

Still, however, something may be said on the subject of Christian liberty. It can hardly be imagined, that an exact uniformity in the sentiments of Christians was in the contemplation of the founder of our religion. Some diversity was to be expected from the different conformation of the human mind in different individuals: from the more or less sanguine complexion of their tempers: from the varying circumstances of education and early habit: and even from the unequal means vouchsafed us of attaining to the true sense of Scripture. With regard to *faith*, the latitude allowed to Christians does not appear to be very great. St. John in his first Epistle[1], written at a time when questions of this kind began to be agitated, makes it essential to the character of a Christian to believe that Jesus is the Christ. This belief must be explained to signify faith in the doctrines of Jesus, whether moral or speculative, in the efficacy of his sufferings, and in the certainty of his promises; for we have no idea of the title *Christ*, but what we collect from the Scriptures, in which these doctrines, sufferings, and promises are recorded. To believe in his divine mission on the authority of Scripture (and on no other is it possible), and yet to deny what the same authority has recorded of Christ, must be, wherever that record is plain, a glaring absurdity, and one, which, if it were not practised at the present day, might seem incredible: I say, where the record is plain; on the obscurities of Scripture I need not here insist: they are best known to those who have studied the Scriptures most: but the doctrine, that Christ is God of God, that his death was a vicarious satisfaction for the sins of mankind, and that he will finally judge the world at a general resurrection, must, I think, appear to every impartial reader of Scripture to be incontrovertible truths, and to be necessarily included in the belief, that Jesus is the Christ. Socinianism, however, disdains to travel in the

[1] 1 John, v. 1.

ordinary track of the human understanding: we have lately seen its alleged improvements in the version and exposition of the New Testament[1]; its gratuitous deviations from phraseology familiar to our childhood; its disingenuous evasions and suppressions; its laborious perversion of the most obvious constructions; its parallelisms destitute of all similitude; its figurative solutions of literal assertions; its metaphysical embarrassment of what is plain; and its popular elucidations of what is mysterious. What mercy the Almighty may be pleased to show to prejudices so stubborn, it is not for us to determine; we fear that if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost[2]: but of the church, as the depositary of the faith once delivered to the saints, it is the bounden duty to state that faith unsophisticated by theories, unmutilated, unperverted.

In an attempt, however, to ascertain the latitude of Christian faith, it may be right to say something of enthusiasm: the character of which, that I may not be thought to represent it unfairly, I will take from a writer, who was not only a profound philosopher, but a zealous Christian, and who cannot easily be suspected of coldness in the cause of the gospel. Religious "enthusiasm," says *Hartley*, "may be defined a mistaken persuasion in any person, that he is a peculiar favourite with God; and that he receives supernatural marks thereof. The vividness of the ideas of this class easily generates this false persuasion in persons of strong fancies, little experience in divine things, and narrow understandings, by giving a reality and certainty to all the reveries of a man's own mind, and cementing the associations in a preternatural manner. It may also be easily contracted by contagion, as daily experience shows; and indeed more easily than most other dispositions, from the glaring language used by enthusiasts, and from the great flattery and support, which enthusiasm affords to pride and self-conceit."[3] It is impossible to

[1] "The New Testament in an *improved* version, upon the basis of Archbishop Newcome's translation;" and having in the title-page a motto from Archbishop Parker! Nothing can be more imposing: this is indeed to comply with Pindar's precept,

ἀρχομένους δ' ἔργου, πρόσωπον
λρὴ θέμεν τηλαυγές.

[2] 2 Cor. iv. 3.

[3] On Man, Vol. i. p. 490. Edit. 1791.

read this passage at the present day, and not to be reminded of the pretences and proceedings of a class of seceders from our establishment. I am far, indeed, from intending to fix the offensive charge of enthusiasm upon all, who feel a more than ordinary degree of solicitude for the salvation of their souls: if any conceivable temper of mind have the sanction of right reason, it is an awful sense of the infinite moment of religion. That enthusiasm, however, as it is thus described, does actually exist among us, will not be denied, any more than will the prevalence of indifference and infidelity. To what else can we impute it, that mechanics and peasants desert their callings to become preachers of the gospel, as if, like the first promulgers of Christianity, they were miraculously "endued with power from on high?"[1] To what else can we attribute the extravagance of their doctrines, their want of candour[2], their spiritual pride, and their otherwise amazing success in bewildering the minds of the illiterate and simple? Of their faith, however, we may safely affirm, that it is not the true faith of the gospel: it is as truly essential to evangelical faith to believe that our salvation will depend upon our own virtuous endeavours assisted by divine grace, as that Christ died to atone for the sins of fallen creatures. The mercy to be shown to man through Christ can be exercised only at the day of judgment; and yet we have Christ's own declaration, that at that day he will "reward every man according to his works."[3] It is true, that these persons strenuously deny their intention to injure Christian morals: they are not, in general, avowed Antinomians; and probably they believe themselves guiltless of the charge: the strong delusion by which they are actuated, obstructs the exercise of the understanding: else we might ask them, is not such the manifest, the inevitable tendency of their writings and discourses? The doctrine of the atonement is assuredly the basis of the Christian scheme; and properly understood, it is full of comfort to human weakness, and the strongest stimulus to virtuous exertion: it is a check upon presumption, and a

[1] St. Luke, xxiv. 49.

[2] There seems to have been in every age of Christianity, abundant foundation for the remark of St. Austin: "*Charitas Christiana nisi in Unitate Ecclesiæ non potest custodiri.*" Adv. lit. Petil.

[3] St. Matt. xvi. 27.

preservative against despair. But when the merits and the all-sufficiency of this sacrifice are the preacher's *unvaried* theme; when the promise of salvation is holden out on the condition of *mere* believing; when every thing exalted is said of faith, and works are never mentioned, unless in the language of disparagement[1] and contempt; we cannot but feel alarm for the interests of Christian morals, we cannot allow to such preaching that it discovers an evangelical spirit. In proof that St. Paul was not an enthusiast, it has been well remarked[2], that he every where lays a great stress on moral observances: there is not one of his epistles, of which this may not be affirmed: of the epistle to the Romans, which treats principally of justification by faith, at least four chapters are wholly devoted to the enforcement of social duties. I need not refer to the teaching of our Saviour, a great part of whose parables, and whose sermon on the Mount, authorise us, while we preach on faith, to be preachers also of moral righteousness.[3] Yet we are told, that we shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and that we handle his word deceitfully: if there be indeed any of us who thus act, in reverence for my brethren I would not be their accuser; but in the

[1] Of these preachers it is the favourite dogma, that "works have no merit." This proposition, though unquestionably true, is one of those, which require some caution in the manner of propounding them. It is true that works of themselves will not save us: there is no *necessary* connexion between good works and salvation: "when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants," Luke xvii. 10. and "by grace are we saved," Eph. ii. 5. There is, therefore, in good works no *inherent* merit; and hence, boasting is excluded, Eph. ii. 9. On the other hand, we read of "a resurrection of life to them that have done good," John v. 29.; "that our works follow us," Rev. xiv. 13. and of "those, who shall be *accounted worthy* to obtain the future world," Luke xx. 35.: and our twelfth article describes good works, as being "pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ." It is plain, therefore, that good works, notwithstanding their natural worthlessness, have, when they proceed from faith, an *imputed* merit; and this is, surely, a sufficient ground for preaching them. Dr. *Paley*'s distinction (Sermon XX.) is nearly to the same effect; that the death of Christ is the *cause* of our salvation, and a good life the *condition*. It is not probable that either of these distinctions should occur to illiterate persons, on hearing simply that works have no merit.

[2] *Paley, Horæ Paulinæ*, p. 411.

[3] One would imagine that nothing could be more easy or more obvious: yet we frequently find, that where a proposition is made up of two dissimilar parts, the parts will have their respective advocates, while the tenor of the whole will be overlooked. It was thus in the early ages of Christianity with the union of the two natures in Christ. One class of heretics made him to be mere man, another to be mere God. One man sees in Christianity nothing but faith; another resolves the whole into morality. Human nature is so perverse, that it will not attend to both sides of a question.

fear of God I should tremble to be their apologist. The charge, however, may probably be retorted with greater justice: it is the very nature of sectarism, especially of enthusiastical sects, to have partial views of Scripture: a gloomy temperament, the preaching of sectaries themselves partial, ignorance of Scripture from the defect of early education, and in many instances an alarmed conscience, are causes which lead men to catch at the particular declarations of religion, which seem to favour their respective preconceptions, and to disregard the rest. Perhaps it may be affirmed, that no sectary ever held the whole of Scripture in equal estimation: his business is not with the whole, but with the parts which countenance his creed: and this creed not being formed on a comprehensive examination of Scripture[1], on the sentiments of the early Christians, or on a comparison of the tenets of the contending parties, which have since arisen, will, of course, for its credit and support rely on detached texts. The case of the establishment, we think, is different: creeds framed from the whole of Scripture soon after the promulgation of the gospel, and articles drawn upon the downfall of papal corruption, though confessedly the works of man, promise, so far as is possible, to secure an uniformity of doctrine, and to display the genuine and catholic spirit of the gospel. We hold that "*all* scripture is profitable" unto salvation: and it is our happiness, that "from children we have known the Holy Scriptures."[2]

On the whole, it appears that the only latitude allowed to Christians in matters of faith is confined to points on which the Scripture is either silent, or which it has not revealed explicitly: of this kind are the manner in which the prescience of God may be reconciled with human free-will: the state of departed spirits between death and the resurrection; the kind of happiness reserved for the blessed; and whether the good shall be known to each other in a future existence. On all

[1] It might not be unserviceable to the cause of genuine Christianity to collect the scriptural texts on which different sects respectively rest their tenets, and to examine their import by the ordinary helps of criticism, by the context, by a comparison of parallel passages, by explaining the Scripture idiom, and by referring to the prevailing opinions of the times, when the N. T. was written. The result might be the lessening of division, wherever it arises from mere misconception: certainly it would place in the clearest light the moderation of the principles and the soundness of the doctrines maintained by our Church.

[2] 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

such questions every one is at liberty to use his judgment, provided he make not his own deductions the means of public discord.

But though the latitude, which the Gospel allows in Christian *doctrine* be not great, more is conceded in the *government* and *discipline*, by which Christian societies are to be regulated and restrained. A religion destined by its author to be disseminated over the whole earth, evidently needed to recommend itself in this particular by its accommodating temper: and yet certainly it has manifested a decided preference of that form of ecclesiastical polity, the counterpart of which in civil government has the sanction of history and experience. Already in the age of the Apostles we read of the institution of episcopacy; in the same age we have distinct mention of the three orders of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons[1]; and in the period immediately succeeding, we find all the Christian churches under the same regimen. The converts entertained no petty jealousies on account of the pre-eminence of those who were invested with spiritual distinction; they acted like men, who know that the division of supreme authority defeats its own purpose; that no security is thus gained to the impartial administration of justice; that the natural tendency of all power is to settle in an individual; and that while it is still vibrating in uncertainty, oppression will be most severely felt. There is not in the whole of *Eusebius*'s history a single recorded instance, in which the presbytery presumed to aspire to independent authority[2], or in which the laity, so far as appears, would have favoured such an attempt. That individuals occasionally, as in the case of Arius, were disposed to be contumacious, affords no exception from the truth of the remark; neither can it be objected, that in some instances we find an Anti-bishop set up by a faction; for the factious did thus recognise the validity of episcopal jurisdiction.

It must, however, be admitted, that a different form of church government from that which prevails among ourselves, has been found to answer the great ends of order and

[1] Beveridge's Cod. Can. (ap. Cotelier) Lib. II. cap. xi. § 9.

[2] The revolt of Felicissimus and the five Presbyters, spoken of in Cyprian's epistles, was not deemed of sufficient importance to be noticed by Eusebius, nor was it followed by any lasting consequences.

piety; and indeed it is not easy to conceive, considering the relation between the civil and ecclesiastical government in nations, how a prelatical hierarchy could conveniently subsist with republicanism in the state. It might, therefore, be the wisdom of Divine Providence to leave this point undetermined by any positive command. In this country, however, there is happily no such pretence for rejecting the ordinance of the Apostles: still less is there even the shadow of authority for fanatical notions of independency and anarchy to be found in the gospel of that God, who is the author not of confusion, but of peace, in all churches of the saints.[1]

The *rites* to be observed in the church of Christ it is much more difficult to collect from Scripture, than the form of its government. If we except those which appertain to the two sacraments, and the imposition of hands in conferring the Holy Spirit, little can be deduced from the directions of Scripture or the practice of the Apostles. Decency and order are the only standards, to which rites are to be referred. It might, then, have been hoped that on this ground the church of England would have had no cavils to encounter: her ceremonies are few, but significant; she is not either attractive by her pomp, or offensive by her negligence; she is equally averse from papal pageantry and Calvinistic gloom; she seeks not to dazzle the imagination, while she is careful not to repulse the feelings; she recognises the power of association over the human mind, at the same time she remembers the propensity of the mind to acquiesce in mere external impressions, when the appeal is made to the senses rather than to the heart. Yet we know with what acrimony, in one period of our history, our rites have been condemned, and the prejudice against them has hardly yet subsided: a plea

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 33. This remark may be extended to the writings of the Old Testament, with especial reference to the Jewish theocracy; many of the institutions of which, in respect of church government, bear no remote analogy to the form which was adopted by the Apostles. From independency it seems to have been most abhorrent: "In antient time every man performed the office of a priest in his own family; but that liberty was taken away by the law of Moses, because it had been abused to idolatry; and every man was bound to bring his sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, to be offered upon the altar, where none but the sons of Aaron could officiate, and every thing was done under the eye of the ministers of religion and the governors of the people." *Lewis's Heb. Antiq.* vol. ii. p. 483.

for separation has been founded on our position of the communion table, on the use of the ring in marriage, or the wearing of a hood or a surplice.

The way, then, is prepared for our resolving the question, whether any degree of blame attach to those "divisions of Christ," which unhappily subsist among ourselves. We recognise the principle of Christian liberty; and far be it from us to cherish uncharitable feelings towards those, who use it to its fullest scriptural extent. Sincere and conscientious dissent must command our reverence, while it will excite our regret. If any man, after mature and dispassionate deliberation, believe his salvation to be endangered by his remaining in the communion of the Church, he certainly does well to separate from us without delay: all that can be required is, that such deliberation be actually exercised; that no considerations, but those which exclusively regard his salvation, be allowed to interfere; and that he use not his liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servant of God.[1] Religious, no less than political liberty, may degenerate into licentiousness; its exercise may be needless, or petulant, or indiscreet; it may be caused by misconception or misrepresentation, or it may proceed from unworthy motives, so as entirely to be divested of the circumstances, which alone make it innocent in the sight of God, or even respectable in the eyes of men. How far, then, do these or similar causes vitiate the purity of modern separation? Now some or all of the following facts must have struck the most superficial observer. There is frequently among those, who secede from our communion, a love of novelty: this, indeed, many of them virtually admit by regularly exchanging the ministers who have taught them for a limited time. In many instances, political feelings have had their weight; insomuch that the political bias of individuals may sometimes be inferred from their religious connexion. Many disdain to listen to preachers whom they themselves have not appointed; for the love of patronage is not confined to objects of high importance. With some, religious instruction is a subject of taste and criticism; and the preference is given to an impassioned delivery or a flowery style. The simple are seduced by unpre-

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 16.

meditated effusions, which they mistake for the eloquence of inspiration; and the rigid are imposed upon by specious professions of superior sanctity. These and a multitude of similar facts display the character and spirit of secession: but of this spirit, however it might occasionally operate, the present extensive influence may be traced to the following causes; a prevailing inattention to the origin and obligation of church-communion, and an erroneous estimate of what may be expected from the ministers of religion.

The benefits which Christianity derived from the reformation are so generally acknowledged, that it may seem invidious to represent it as accompanied with a portion of evil, however small: it broke the chains of tyranny, and dissolved the spells of imposture: it diffused light, where all was darkness, and exhibited the gospel as the gift of God, and its worship as a reasonable service. But to hope for good unmixed with evil, is not authorized by any analogy in the moral government of God. At that era the principle of union in the Christian world received a shock, from which it has not since recovered: a blind adherence to the church gave way to a captious and disputatious spirit: the necessity for reform, which had been made so evident, left an impression on the minds of many, that much was yet to be done; and the proceedings of the reformers were too temperate and judicious, to extinguish the thirst of innovation. Thenceforward the obligation to unity was decried as the fiction of a corrupt theology, which sought only the security and aggrandizement of its professors; and new factions in religion have continued to arise, not agreeing in any common principle, but that of enmity to the establishment. The diffusion of literature in more recent times has strengthened and extended the evil, by giving birth to a swarm of half-thinkers and sciolists, whose crude and inconsistent theories on religious subjects have served only to multiply division.

There have, however, been many, who, while they deny not the obligation to church-communion, have formed an erroneous judgment of what may be expected from the ministers of religion. Their error consists in not sufficiently distinguishing between the visible and the invisible church.[1] They

[1] On this subject we have a masterly treatise by Dr. *Rogers*, 8vo. 1719, which ought to be generally read, especially by the laity, as containing a doctrine very

have conceived an idea of purity in life and perfection in doctrine, which cannot be realized in our present state of being. Like theorists in the science of civil government, they profess unbounded reverence for a phantom of their own creation, which they set up as the standard of practical excellence ; and not finding that the actual administration of religion will abide their test, they forsake our communion with expressions of regret, yet insist that they are still members of the church. To those who are in pursuit of visionary good, it is vain to offer arguments founded on the unalterable condition of things: experience alone can dissipate their delusion: and when they shall have learnt that evils of some sort exist in other religious societies in at least an equal degree, if disappointment and disgust have not obliterated all regard for religion, they may possibly return to us with kinder feelings and juster views. But to those that still adhere to our establishment, we may, without maintaining that it is perfect, profitably suggest the means of grace and salvation, which it affords: we may remind them how much, in every condition of the church, must depend on their own sincerity and earnestness ; and we may venture to add, that sacrifices to peace and good-will are assuredly not unacceptable to the Father of Jesus Christ. That they may attain only to the holiness of life and hope of glory, which are compatible with church-communion, is, perhaps, as benevolent a wish as charity can conceive, and as pure a prayer as piety can utter.

But in this state of things, what is the conduct more immediately incumbent on the clergy? That the crisis is important, requires no proof: "Christ is divided:" and the divisions which exist, while they threaten the destruction of

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"necessary for these times." Towards the conclusion he observes, "that a great part of the dangers and distractions that have either befallen or threatened this church for some ages past, and which particularly alarm our apprehensions at present, may be ascribed principally to the confusion of these two ideas, will appear to any one, who will trace the several attempts that have been made upon our peace and constitution back to their principles. The judicious Mr. *Hooker* saw plainly how dangerously this stumbling-block lay in the way of men's inquiries into the nature and constitution of the church." Even *Richard Baxter*, the great apostle of division, in his Life written by himself, observes, "I am not too narrow in my principles of church-communion, as once I was: I more plainly perceive the difference between the church, as congregate or visible, and as regenerate or mystical." See Dr. *Wordsworth*'s "Ecclesiastical Biography," vol. v. p. 576.

our revered establishment[1], strike ultimately at the vitals of all true religion. They who overleap the pale of our church, go they know not whither: they become the sport of angry passions and of fluctuating opinions: emancipated from restraint, they are ready to make trial of every scheme of Christianity which holds out the requisite allurements, and rarely find a fixed resting-place for their faith or hope. On so momentous a subject, and before such an audience, it is impossible that I should offer any suggestion without extreme mistrust.

The result of our inquiry, if it be correct, will not authorize the expectation, that the conduct of the clergy, however exemplary and judicious, would entirely remove the evil: it arises, in great measure, from causes over which we have no controul; but if in any degree our exertions may avail to so important an end, we cannot withhold them without incurring the heavy displeasure of God.

Of the *morals* of the clergy I am not aware that the complaints are loud: casual irregularities will, of course, be heard of; and we ought not to hope for any extenuation of their enormity: they have, indeed, let us confess it, a more than ordinary degree of criminality, whether we consider our sacred obligations, the force of our example, or the advantages we possess from education.[2] But it cannot be dissembled, that a mere abstinence from acts of immorality, and an outward decency of demeanour, fall far short of the character to which we ought to aspire. In no profession must he who would adorn it be satisfied, if he do not disgrace it: he must enter fully into the importance of its objects, and find his chief pleasure in the discharge of its duties: and this is more

[1] It is not to be imagined, that such an event is in the contemplation of all those, who countenance the cause of separation: yet it behoves them to consider, whether they may not be accessary to evils, which they would be among the first to deplore. Their virtues are the quota, which they unthinkingly contribute to the work of division: great revolutions are rarely effected but by the monstrous coalition of the upright with the wicked; of the unwary, who have principle, with the unprincipled who have talents. "It grieves me," says *Hoadly*, "to see a church torn to pieces, its members divided from one another, discord triumphing upon the ruins of unity, and uncharitableness reigning without controul; and all this brought about by men of seriousness and consideration, men that profess they desire nothing more than the edification and perfection of this very church." *Reasonableness of Conformity*, 3d edit. p. 149.

[2] Our twenty-sixth article maintains the efficacy of the sacraments, though administered by men of immoral lives: at the same time it passes a censure on ministers, whose conduct may give offence and disgust to serious Christians.

especially the case in our own. A clergyman is to be distinguished by his pursuits, his studies, his sentiments, his habits, his amusements: if ever these become wholly secular, he forfeits the veneration of the wise and good, and abridges, if he does not destroy, his utility. Neither ought we to lament, that our virtues are frequently of that retired and obscure character, which withholds from them popular applause. The world hears little of the economy, which with slender means, decently, perhaps liberally, educates a numerous offspring; of the patient condescension, which adapts itself to the untutored understandings of the poor[1]; of the charity, which is necessarily confined to the narrow limits of a parish; or of studies prompted by the modest motive of self-improvement: these have their reward in heaven.

With regard to the soundness of our *doctrine*, I would hint the danger to which it may be exposed by the circumstances of the times. Independently of that idiosyncrasy, which leads different men to view the same truths in different lights, we are liable to contract prejudices from the controversies of the day: to these we cannot, and we ought not, to be inattentive; but it is difficult for those, who are shocked with the extravagance of a party, not to run into the opposite extreme. There was a time when practices, in themselves innocent and laudible, were reprobated, because they had been used by papists: and in the reign of our second CHARLES a spirit of false shame so far prevailed, that men were afraid of being known to exercise the most rational devotion, lest they should be thought to be infected with the fanaticism of

[1] To this condescension it is impossible to give too much praise. Men learnedly educated, and rarely conversing but with men of education, have no adequate idea of the low state of intellect among our peasantry. Our language abounds with sermons distinguished by eloquence, erudition, and depth of thought; but of those, which have hitherto been printed, few, comparatively, are more intelligible to a common labourer, than is a Homily of Chrysostom in the original Greek. In behalf of such a hearer one is ready to exclaim,

πῶς; ὃ μανθάνω·
ἀμαθέστερόν πως εἰπὲ καὶ σαφέστερον.

What is wanted is not merely plain language, but plain reasoning; and even this must be sparingly employed: a familiar exposition of Christian doctrines and duties, with a solemn and earnest injunction to believe the one and to practise the other, is in many cases the only method of preaching usefully. And after all, preaching is but a part of the instruction, which the necessities of the illiterate require at our hands.

puritans and independents. There is reason to apprehend that similar causes in our own age may be attended with similar effects. In conversing with the laity, we may occasionally remark a disposition to stigmatize doctrines and practices which have heretofore been deemed inseparable from genuine Christianity: opprobrious epithets are indiscriminately applied to all, who carry their notions of religion beyond the observance of external ordinances; no imputation seems more to be dreaded than that of piety; and the growing neglect of family prayer, indeed of all prayer, may perhaps be attributed to this prejudice. It can hardly be doubted that *our* more extensive acquaintance with the scriptures, with the history of other and better times, and with the writings of such men, as HALL and TAYLOR and SCOTT, will enable us to distinguish the everlasting truths of the gospel from the errors of a fleeting enthusiasm.

I will conclude with a few words on the subject of *zeal*: and I confess, that the danger of our failure in this particular appears to me to be so considerable, as to merit our especial attention. In addition to the general contempt, into which religious zeal has fallen, from causes already alluded to, there are other disadvantages with which we have to contend. Retirement is apt to induce languor; besides that it frequently conceals from us the urgent necessity for exertion: and studious pursuits, from the great hold, which they take of the mind, as well as from the importance which we properly attach to them, may produce a habit of thinking, where we are called upon to act. The frequent repetition of official instruction may abate in some degree, with respect to ourselves, the force of the admonitions, which move and impress others: or the little effect produced by them on others may operate to our discouragement. But these are subordinate considerations: it is vain to dissemble that there is in the very nature of establishments, political as well as religious, a certain tendency to supineness and security: they rarely possess the activity and vigour of the factions by which they are assailed: their adherents are apt to acquiesce in the discharge of stated duties; and they do not advert to the sacrifices and exertions, which extraordinary emergencies demand. The time is arrived, when the faithful servants of Christ and his church must think nothing done, while any thing yet

remains to be effected by their vigilance and zeal. If in the present divided state of religious opinion it shall appear to those who are entrusted to our charge, that other teachers are more deeply interested in their salvation, we must not expect that they will uniformly examine the soundness of the doctrines propounded to them, or the pretensions of the proposer: we must not wonder, if ignorance prevail against learning, if fanaticism triumph over truth and soberness, or the want of regular appointment be overlooked, in the confident asseverations of a call from God. Let us, therefore, obviate, as far as is possible, every plea for separation founded on our apparent indifference to the spiritual welfare of our flocks: let us habitually meditate on the momentous obligations which we have voluntarily and solemnly incurred: let our talents, our leisure, our authority, our benevolence, be devoted to this sacred cause: above all, let us remember, that whatever be our natural powers, we are not sufficient for the great task in which we have engaged, unless God shall bless our endeavours with the aid of his Holy Spirit.

NATIONAL PROVIDENCE:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL IN CALCUTTA,

On the 13th April, 1815;

BEING

THE DAY APPOINTED BY PROCLAMATION OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE GOVERNOR GENERAL,

FOR

A GENERAL THANKSGIVING

THROUGHOUT THE HONOURABLE COMPANY'S TERRITORIES IN INDIA,

FOR THE GREAT AND PUBLIC BLESSINGS OF PEACE IN EUROPE.

TO

THE HONOURABLE

N. B. EDMONSTONE, Esq.

VICE PRESIDENT IN COUNCIL,

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,

MADE PUBLIC AT HIS REQUEST,

IS WITH THE HIGHEST RESPECT AND ESTEEM

INSCRIBED

BY

HIS MOST OBEDIENT

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

May 1. 1815.

NATIONAL PROVIDENCE:

A

SERMON.

"*And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord.*" — Acts xvii. 26, 27.

St. Paul had now arrived at Athens to preach Jesus and the Resurrection. A doctrine so new to a people, who were curious upon even the most trivial topics, and taught in a city, where philosophical inquiries were prosecuted with ardour, could not fail to attract attention: the Epicureans and the Stoics immediately encounter him; and wishing to hear a declaration of his principles without interruption from the populace, they conduct him to the hill of Mars. The discourse which St. Paul there delivered, has always been admired for its eloquence; but it has recommendations, which are sometimes not included under that term: it is peculiarly adapted to the character and condition of the persons to whom it was addressed: it has regard to their well-known views and prejudices; it appeals to their own literature in support of a fundamental truth: and the errors, which it opposes, while they are such only, as prevailed among the hearers, it yet corrects without the intemperance of an indignant zeal, and even without any expression which might reasonably give offence: the censure, which our common translation makes the Apostle to pronounce upon the Athenians, of being "in all things too superstitious," conveys in the original nothing more, than that they were much addicted to some sort of religion: a very natural inference, when he

observed, in every quarter of the city, temples and altars to the unknown Gods, and to the numberless Divinities of Paganism. In these points of view, indeed, the address of St. Paul is a model, which the Christian missionary in every age will do well to imitate: while it declares unequivocally and fearlessly the first truths of natural and revealed religion, one Creator, one Providence, and a final judgment by a risen Saviour, it is marked with a spirit of moderation, of propriety, and of good sense, which the character and conduct of the Apostle of the Gentiles show to be compatible with Christian zeal, and with devotion to the cause of the Gospel.

The portion of his address, which I have selected to assist your reflections at this festive solemnity, has evident marks of that fitness and propriety which I have ascribed to the whole. The assertion, that all nations are of one blood, was opposed to a favourite notion of the Athenians, that they themselves were a peculiar race, the offspring of the earth which they inhabited: the doctrine of a Providence was equally adverse to the tenets both of the Epicureans and the Stoics: the former of whom maintained, that the world was the sport of chance, while the latter adopted the opinion of a blind fatality: and the inference that men should hence learn "to seek the Lord," is levelled at the ignorance, which professed not to know the nature or the attributes of the object of its adoration. On the position, however important, that the human race is descended from the same progenitor, I mean not to occupy your time: it has, indeed, been assailed in the theories of sceptical philosophers, and certainly their purpose has been answered by calling it into question; for independently that the truth of Scripture is pledged to the fact, it indirectly involves the scheme of human redemption: a common remedy provided by the Almighty for our common corruption supposes that corruption to proceed from a common source. But such an inquiry is foreign from my present design: rather would I on this day preach to you the Providence of the God of empires; of him, who hath determined the times before appointed of their duration, and the limits of their power, with reference especially to the signal mercies which we now commemorate.

A general notion of Providence is inseparable from every idea of God: we cannot imagine this wonderful frame of

things to have been called into existence, but at the command of a Being infinite in power, in wisdom, and in goodness; and no less difficult is it to conceive, how it could be preserved in the harmony and perfection in which we behold it, unless the same power and wisdom and goodness were every moment operative in maintaining it. The natural tendency of every thing is to decay and dissolution: we perceive the evidences of this truth in all which our own power produces, and even in those works of God, to which the manifest purposes of his wisdom assign not a long duration: our most skilful contrivances require to be continually renewed and repaired, and even thus, after a few years, they cease to be effective: institutions, originally conceived by policy or benevolence, and maintained with zeal, imperceptibly lose their vigour and sink into the imbecility of age: and man himself, admirably as he is endowed, finds his mental powers subside into decrepitude, while his body, fearfully and wonderfully made, subsists, as it were, only by a miracle every moment renewed, till the hand which sustains it is gently withdrawn, not in weakness but in mercy, to point to a better world. The doctrine, therefore, of a superintending Providence presents itself in every view of nature: it meets us in our reflections, and it crosses the mind in all its paths. — But it may not, perhaps, be quite so easy to form an idea of the *disposing* Providence of God: which, however, is the particular view of it insisted on by the Apostle, and to which I would therefore call your attention. By a disposing Providence is meant that mysterious power of the Almighty, by which he has arranged from the commencement of things the long series of causes and effects, which constitute the course of events in this lower world. According to this attribute, nothing can happen, which has not been from eternity in the contemplation of God, and what is much more, which he has not contemplated as a mean conducing to a given end. In the scheme of a disposing Providence, nothing which is brought to pass is without its consequences: in all which God does, and in all which he permits, there is design: incidents which seem to be absolutely independent, are linked together by a secret connexion; and one regular consistent plan is going on amidst the apparent distraction and confusion of sublunary concerns. It is easy to perceive, that this account of God's government

of the world is directly contrary to the Epicurean notion, that all things are left to chance; but it may not immediately occur to you, that it essentially differs from the fatality or necessity of the Stoics; and a clear understanding of this point is the more important, because it is intimately connected with some pernicious misconceptions, which subsist at the present day. To speak of man, as a mere machine actuated by motives without the power of choice, is to dishonour God, however unintentionally or unconsciously this has sometimes been done by persons who sincerely embrace the Gospel.

Ill indeed should I employ your time, if I were to lead you into the intricate disquisitions, by which theologians have endeavoured to reconcile a disposing Providence with the freedom of human action: nor am I aware, that a nice adjustment of such difficulties is any part of our Christian calling. I would merely observe, that these difficulties are not wholly on one side of the question: if the mind labours to conceive how God can foresee the conduct of an agent, who is actually at liberty, it is, on the other hand, as difficult to understand how our freedom can be disturbed, or our actions influenced, by a prescience, which imposes on us no sensible constraint, and of which we do not even know the tenor. Those, whom God hath predestinated, we are assured that he also foreknew[1]: and the great difficulty seems to be resolvable into man's inability to conceive the foreknowledge of God; a vain and presumptuous attempt, less suited to our finite faculties, than to be humble and adore. Sufficient for us it is to know, that while we are instruments in the hand of God, (and it were repugnant to our reason no less than to our faith, to suppose the independence of created beings,) yet the Almighty in every page of his holy word addresses us as rational and moral agents unfettered by any necessity, and propounds to us his laws, as to those who may either obey or disregard them. Whatever be the metaphysical subtilties attending questions of this sort, happily they have nothing to do with practice, nor are they practically felt. How, then, shall we distinguish between a blind fatality and a disposing Providence? Fatality excludes every idea of justice and of mercy: the attribute of wisdom does not belong to it; it rests

[1] Rom viii. 29.

solely and entirely upon power, or, more properly speaking, upon force; which it supposes to be inherent in the nature of things, and not to be spontaneously directed by a superintending and controlling goodness. Such is fatality: but the disposing Providence of God, as received by the Christian, is a grand system resulting from the combination of all the attributes, which we ascribe to the Almighty, conspiring to the best of ends: in that system his justice invades not human freedom; his mercy and his grace assist human weakness; his wisdom is engaged in plans of ultimate and eternal good; and his power is exerted in their accomplishment. The notion of such a Providence differs from that of fatality, as the stern decrees of an inexorable tyrant differ from the tender mercies of a parent: a subjection to fatality chills every generous feeling of the heart, thwarts every fair and noble purpose, and blasts every hope; while the doctrine of a Providence is full of consolation, whispering peace to those, who know, that all things, whether prosperous or adverse, work together for good, to them that love God.[1]

If these remarks, then, be just, and have been clearly apprehended, they seem adapted to lead the mind to no vain contemplation of that magnificent display of wonders developed by the Apostle. Let your imagination place before you in succession the kingdoms of the world. Observe their beginnings, their progress, their revolutions, and their subversion; and then reflect, that a disposing Providence determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their habitation to all nations of men that have dwelt upon the face of the earth. Scarcely had the waters of the deluge subsided, when Nimrod went forth, as the Scriptures express it, "a mighty hunter before the Lord[2];" and Ninus and Semiramis consolidated an empire, which included the principal nations of the East: and yet of Babylon the traveller finds only the fragments of foundations, and of Nineveh he seeks the site in vain: so true was the prophetic word, "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrha[3]:" and of Nineveh it was foretold, with an exact allusion to the manner of its destruction by an inundation of the Tigris,

[1] Rom. viii. 28. [2] Gen. x. 9. [3] Isaiah xiii. 19.

"The Lord with an over-running flood will make an utter end of the place thereof."[1] Where also is the greatness of Egypt, her science and her arts? Where is the power of Sesostris, of Necho, and of Amasis? The successive revolutions of that state have been the subject of prophecy; and Ezekiel has declared that "there shall be no more a Prince (a native Prince) of the land of Egypt[2]:" a few massy piles are all that remain to mark the grandeur and the vanity of a dominion of eighteen hundred years. Pursuing the same train of thought, we meditate amidst the ruins of Persepolis: we trace the march and the achievements of Alexander; we admire the monuments of the literature and wisdom of imperial Rome; and we contemplate with reverence the affecting spectacle of fallen greatness on the throne of the Moghuls: but from these and from the long catalogue of political vicissitudes the inference is the same, that all power is of God; — that he hath appointed to the nations of the earth their times and the bounds of their habitation; — that where the limit is fixed, or when the period is expired, valour and policy and the splendour of a name are alike unavailing; the timid become warlike, the rude submit to discipline, and the oppressed break their chains: and the wisdom, by which empire has been acquired and maintained, seems at once to dwindle into fatuity. Contemplating such changes the mere children of the world would resolve the whole into the operation of second causes; or if these, as it frequently happens, be found insufficient to solve the difficulty, they cut the knot at once, and ascribe the whole to chance: but chance has no place in the philosophy, any more than in the creed, of the Christian. He neither overlooks the operation of second causes, neither does he forget, that these are nothing more than means employed by the Almighty for accomplishing his purposes through the instrumentality of men: he will not exclude the great first cause, for that is Atheism; nor will he deny that in the ordinary course of Providence, second causes may be expected to produce their proper effects; for that leads to an expectation of continual miracles, which is the folly of the enthusiast: but he will observe in this complicated system of things, how admirably, how beautifully, it has been ordained,

[1] Nahum i. 8. [2] Ezek. xxx. 13.

that second causes for the most part, under the Divine permission, shall be efficacious, without which, mankind could not be induced to persist in the course of action assigned them by the Creator, and that they sometimes shall fail, that we may not acquire a presumptuous confidence in the powers entrusted to us, but may be reminded "to seek the Lord." Impressed with these convictions, the statesman will pursue the measures, which an upright policy suggests, and which the experience of ages has, on the whole, approved: but he will not rely upon their success, independently of the Divine blessing, nor will he fail to recollect, that "there is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord."[1] The history of empires is no other than the history of the Providence of God.

Among the events which are thus ordained to dispense the lessons of wisdom and piety to the sons of men, those which we ourselves have witnessed are perhaps as instructive and as awful as any which the annals of the world record. It has been our lot to behold the exaltation of an individual of very humble origin to an eminence of power, which has not had its parallel in the modern history of Europe. Out of the ruins of the empire of Charlemagne a system of social law arose, by which Europe has been usually governed. Legitimate sovereigns were frequently ambitious, and they exercised an indirect influence over weaker states: but other monarchs equally powerful opposed their views, and made the idea of universal sovereignty impracticable and hopeless. But Providence in its wisdom had permitted the barriers and boundaries of liberty to be swept away, as if it had been only to open to an adventurer the path to the empire of the world. Every thing conspired to his aggrandizement. A once flourishing nation, convulsed by the anarchy of a tremendous revolution and bleeding under the cruelties of successive tyrants, was glad to seek a refuge from its misery by placing him at its head. The libertine and impious opinions, to which that revolution had given courage and currency, had in some degree infected all classes of society through the continent of Europe: his ambition leads him to seek the subjugation of the neighbouring states: from the want of concert,

[1] Prov. xx. 30.

from cowardice, or from treachery, he finds them an easy prey: in the removal of competitors no feeling of remorse, no compunction of conscience, is allowed to interfere: the most secret plots for his destruction are always frustrated by timely discovery: the abhorrence of his crimes is almost extinguished in his unrivalled successes: he becomes acknowledged as a legitimate prince: the venerable head of that Church, which he had renounced, and profaned, invests him with the imperial diadem; and, as if it were to consolidate and transmit his power to the latest posterity, he acquires the alliance of the most illustrious of the houses of Europe. From that moment the short-sighted calculations of human policy inferred that further resistance was vain; while some, who could distinguish the hand of Providence only in the disasters and humiliation of their country, represented it as wicked. It was thus, that the energies of the brave were enfeebled, and a virtuous abhorrence of oppression and wrong was mitigated into a feeling of acquiescence; and the throne of a tyrant, which already possessed every other support, seemed in some measure fortified by the opinion of serious and reflecting men.

There were, however, persons, who, while they contemplated with awe the appalling scenes, which were passing on the earth, humbly hoped, that the cause of justice and humanity should yet be permitted to triumph. Without presuming to fathom the counsels of Omnipotence, and still less to impute to the Almighty their own partial views, they deemed it an act of genuine piety to trust in his mercy, however delayed, and to wait with patience, till in his own good time he should remember to be gracious. The people of God, as the Prophet hath expressed it, "entered into their chambers, and shut their doors about them, and hid themselves as it were for a little moment, until the indignation were overpast."[1] Acknowledging their own unworthiness and that prevailing wickedness, which had provoked Almighty wrath, they still ventured to hope, though against hope, that the oppressor would finally be humbled, and that the afflicted nations of the earth would once more be permitted to dwell in safety. And their prayers have been heard. An event has been brought about, which the ordinary operation of

[1] Isaiah, xxvi. 20.

natural causes is wholly insufficient to explain. Within the short term of eighteen months, the Corsican dynasty of France had reigned with paramount sway over the fairest portion of Europe, and before its expiration, it was confined within the limits of a rock in the ocean. This consummation, I repeat it, is not to be accounted for from the ordinary operation of second causes: it was produced by a combination of causes, every one of which, humanly speaking, was unlikely to be brought into action. Secure in the frozen wilds of the north, the Czar seemed to have little interest in the affairs of southern Europe; nor could he have penetrated thither, had not the common enemy by an act of infatuation prepared for him the way: Prussia had fallen into degradation and had become a petty state: Austria had connected herself with the oppressor by the ties of affinity: the ruler of Sweden had combated by his side: and ages had elapsed, since the banners of England had been unfurled in the fields of France: but concurring improbabilities, which in human computation make it reasonable to conclude that an event will not happen, are no impediments in the counsels of God: with him every thing is certain, whatever be our view of it, which he wills to be. The sovereigns of Europe lead forth their confederate hosts: the jealousies which had dissolved former coalitions, are laid to rest: they conquer, and what is more, they preserve a spirit of magnanimity and moderation: the destroyer is not humbled, but hardened by adversity: he disdains to accept a kingdom, which legitimate sovereigns had considered as among the fairest on the earth: onward he presses to his ruin: his resources fail him, his skill forsakes him: and he retires without dignity, awakening no sentiment but that of contempt. My brethren, if in such a series of events we discern not the agency of him, who hath determined to the dynasties of the earth the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, we are fitted to be disciples of that atheistical philosophy which has convulsed and desolated the world.

But I am not to suppose that these signal manifestations of Almighty Providence are without effect upon *you*; the only remaining part of my duty is to direct the reflections, to which they have given rise, into their proper channel: and this, as we learn from the Apostle, is "that men should seek

the Lord." The injunction is of wide extent: as applied to the Athenians and to all idolaters, who are capable of such deductions, it must be taken to signify, that they should hence infer the existence of an over-ruling power, "if haply," in the words of the Apostle[1], "they might feel after him and find him:" in the case of Christians, who already know him in his works and in his word, the inference is much more general; it goes to almost every point of faith and duty: but I will confine your attention to a few prominent particulars.

I. Considering you as Christians, I would urge you to seek the Lord in a spirit of uniform devotion to his will. It is commonly remarked, that the scheme of Providence is imperfectly understood. The observation is one of those, which, accordingly as we understand it, may coincide with the views either of scepticism or of piety, and is either false or true. If we regard it as referring to the *ends* of Providence, it is false, and it is mischievous in the extreme; for they are as clearly understood as Revelation can make them: we are abundantly assured, that God wills the happiness of his creation: "the Lord is loving to every man, and his mercy is over all his works."[2] But if we apply the remark to the *means* adopted for the accomplishment of his ends, it is most just, and it suggests the very course of conduct which I would inculcate. The scheme of Providence is imperfectly understood. Though the Almighty in all his dispensations proposes and will assuredly produce good, yet we are little capable of perceiving the fitness of the instruments employed, or of estimating the progress which is made. It constantly happens, that in our partial view of it the work is standing still, while in truth it is making rapid strides towards its completion; and we see nothing but evil, where perhaps a multitude of causes, some of them indeed productive of evil, when partially considered, are conspiring by a nice adjustment to great and universal good. In a future state of being we have reason to expect, that we shall know even as we are known: and with such an enlargement of our powers, how shall we be moved to the adoration of God, when we are permitted closely to inspect the complicated machine of his moral government and administration of the world! What

[1] Acts, xvii. 25. [2] Psalm cxiv. 9.

shame will cover the presumption, which arraigned his proceedings? What gratitude will be poured from the bosoms of those, who though allowed to see but little of the system here, in that little were enabled by Divine grace to discern the hand of God! But the Christian will not forget, while he reposes in Providence, that he has more to do, than simply to acquiesce. We have seen that in that stupendous scheme the instrumentality of man is an important feature: we are to regard ourselves as the servants of God and the ministers of his pleasure; and we are to labour with all our power to promote his declared and known purposes. The world in which we live is continually disturbed by the passions of the wicked, the tyranny of the strong, or the phrenzy of the deluded, and yet in the Providence of the God of empires we cannot doubt that the great ends proposed are order and piety and peace. True it is, that God permits conspiracies and rebellions and heresies and schisms to involve nations in civil discord, and for a while to desolate the earth: yet in his hands they become the means of good, if it be only in the punishment of such delinquencies, and in warning future generations against the dangers of being misled by faction and turbulence and pride. Of the last two centuries each has become memorable by a warning of this kind: and that which we have recently witnessed will probably for some time be felt. The sacrifice of two millions of human victims (I speak within the truth), which has obtained for France a constitution certainly not better than that to which her afterwards murdered sovereign would have acceded without loss of lives, has placed in a dreadful point of view the mischiefs to be apprehended from wild theories of government and political abstractions. But the warning, which our own history holds out to us, against the evils of religious divisions, seems from its remoteness to have lost its effect. The clamour for religious liberty was never louder, nor heard with less alarm, than at a time, when all doctrines are taught without restraint, and when men may go forth, pretending to a commission, of which they exhibit no proofs, to vilify whatever is venerable and to impugn whatever is established. But we trust that the Providence of God will still watch over our church and nation, and dispose the hearts of the serious and sober to further his merciful designs: that he will "illu-

minate the clergy with true knowledge and understanding of his word, and give to his people increase of grace to hear it meekly and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit;" and that he will impress on the minds of all, "how good and joyful a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."[1]

II. But in another view of the dispensations of Providence, I am to urge you "to seek the Lord." It was foretold by Noah, that "God should enlarge Japheth, and he should dwell in the tents of Shem[2]:" how amply and how clearly has this prophecy been fulfilled! How hath Japheth, the ancestor of Europeans, been enlarged by their establishment at different periods among the descendants of Shem, the father of the nations of Asia! but most signally in that widely extended dominion, which hath been given by Providence to a distant island in the west. But the gifts of God, whether national or personal, carry with them corresponding obligations: we greatly err, if we imagine that empire is conferred upon nations merely to gratify their avarice or their ambition: we should rather apprehend, that if the tree bear not fruit, it will be cut down as cumbering the ground.[3] But we hope, that the period may yet arrive, when the nations, which surround us, shall have derived from our intercourse benefits which the vicissitudes of the world and the revolutions of empires shall not be able to efface: our legislature has humanely declared, that "it is the duty of our country to promote the interest and the happiness of its subjects in useful knowledge and in moral and religious improvement[4];" preserving, however, a strict regard to those principles of toleration, which are inseparable from the spirit of the Gospel. Under these restrictions, what a field is opened to benevolence, and how powerful are the motives by which it is impelled! Who of us has not been struck with horror at the exhibition of the last few days? What Christian has not praised the Disposer of Events, that he is blessed with a knowledge of the Gospel? How deeply has he felt the truth of that declaration of his Saviour, "My yoke is easy and my burthen is light."[6] With what gratitude does he reflect, that

[1] Psalm cxxxiii. 1.
[2] Gen. viii. 27.
[3] Luke, xiii. 7.
[4] 53 Geo. 3. c. 155.
[5] The rites of Seeva.
[6] Matt. xi. 30.

"a full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction hath been once made for the sins of the whole world!" and how ardently does he wish, that to all the world this saving truth were known! then would pilgrimages and penances, and self-inflicted tortures, and all the modes of individual expiation fall into disuse, and men would adopt a reasonable service: they would "repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins[1]," and they would worship their Maker "in spirit and in truth."[2] For this glorious consummation we must patiently and humbly wait; in the mean time recollecting the part which, in the scheme of Providence, is assigned to ourselves. It was said by an early apologist of our religion, that "the Christian is the same every where[3];" meaning, that wherever his lot may be cast, he professes the same faith and acts upon the same conviction. In the second century, no doubt, this praise was well-merited and just: we might even conceive that Christians, living among Gentile nations, were, if possible, more circumspect in their behaviour on that very account: they would feel that they had to support the character of Christ's religion, and to establish its efficacy in reforming the morals and the hearts of men. It were too much to affirm, that Christianity, even where it is most free from corruption and decay, still retains all the marks of its early vigour: and still less ground is there to believe, that Christians, in their intercourse with the unconverted, regard themselves as living under a heavier responsibility. It is, however, most awfully important, circumstanced as we are here, that we should exceed that measure of Christian righteousness, which in the laxity of the times is frequently thought sufficient: a degenerate Christianity will make but few converts from an inveterate and strongly fortified superstition. Let immoral habits, however common and in whatever form they subsist among us, be renounced: — let the day of rest be generally, not partially, dedicated to God: — let the public worship be regularly, not occasionally, attended, when there is no reasonable impediment: — let it be seen, that we have a religion and a church: — let its ministers, of whatever rank, where they act worthily of their sacred calling, be had in reverence and esteem: — let charit-

[1] Acts, ii. 38. [2] John, iv. 24. [3] Tertullian de Corona.

able institutions be multiplied, and, where they are applicable, extended beyond our own pale: — let it be manifest, that the Gospel regards as "of one blood all the nations of the earth:" — let us cultivate a friendly and instructive intercourse with those who acknowledge our superior advantages: — let useful arts be introduced and encouraged: — and let the evidences of our religion, the only religion which has evidences to produce, be exhibited in their simplest form: — individual duty does not extend beyond these limits; but having discharged it thus far, we may, without presumption, commit the issue unto God.

III. Lastly, as an acknowledgment of what we severally owe to Providence, and in commemoration of great public blessings, I am to urge you to seek the Lord in an act of mercy and compassion. I need scarcely inform you for what class of the unfortunate I wish to plead: I am to conduct you into the gloom of the prison; I am to show you wretchedness without alleviation, and poverty pining in despair. Your bounty on such an occasion will doubtless set at liberty many a captive, and restore to many a disconsolate family the husband and the parent.[1] And for the accomplishment of so much good, what is the sacrifice required? With most of you it is that, which never can be felt, or which those who feel it will remember with delight when the transient indulgence, which might otherwise have been obtained, would have been totally forgotten. Give, therefore, as a disposing Providence may have prospered you; and it shall be returned tenfold into your bosom. At the tribunal of Christ, before which we must all appear, various are the acts performed in this life, on which he will pronounce a blessing; and yours will be, "Inherit the kingdom, for I was in prison and ye came unto me: for inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."[2] Let this declaration sink deep into your hearts, and may the Spirit of God direct you!

[1] A collection was made for the liberation of debtors in the gaols of Calcutta, exceeding 800*l.* sterling.

[2] Matt. xxv. 40.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SALVATION:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

COLOMBO, AT THE CHURCH IN THE FORT,

Sunday, October 27. 1816.

By THOMAS FANSHAW,

BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY LIEUT.-GENERAL

Sir ROBERT BROWNRIGG, Bart. G. C. B.

GOVERNOR OF CEYLON,

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE,

MADE PUBLIC AT HIS EXCELLENCY'S REQUEST,

IS, WITH THE HIGHEST RESPECT

FOR THE WISDOM AND BENEVOLENCE OF

HIS PUBLIC MEASURES,

AND THE TRUEST ESTEEM FOR

HIS PRIVATE WORTH,

INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SALVATION

A

SERMON.

For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. — ISAIAH, lxii. 1.

IT must be evident to all, who are acquainted with the writings of the Prophets, that in speaking of their religion they mingle with their commendations of it the future and more resplendent glories of the church of Christ. The partial revelation already vouchsafed to the people of God was, indeed, when compared with the idolatry and superstition of the neighbouring nations, sufficient to justify them in making it a theme of exultation: it conveyed to them a knowledge of the unity and the perfections of the Creator: it enjoined a reasonable worship: it gave them a summary of moral duties: it imparted to them statutes and ordinances, such as no other nation in the ages of antiquity possessed; and they were entrusted with the custody of those oracles of primeval truth, to which even at the present day we are indebted for the only consistent account of the origination of all things, of the creation of man, and of the causes of that weakness and corruption which pervade his moral system, and have led to consequences so momentous to the whole of the human race. Let any man turn over the pages of the Pentateuch, and examine it with a view to the several subjects of theology, history, morals, and jurisprudence, and then compare it with the sacred books of the Pagans: or let him yield his heart to the pure, the holy, the majestic strains of the Psalmist, and then turn to the eulogies of some fabulous divinity in the most admired of heathen hymns: and after

such an experiment he will not wonder, that enlightened members of the Jewish church should speak of their religion in the tone of triumph, and bless God for the marvellous light which beamed upon the sons of Israel. Still, however, their sacred books abound with expressions so glowing, with descriptions so circumstantial, (yet in many of the circumstances applicable only to a different state of things,) and with predictions, of which in the proudest eras of the Jewish church there has been no appearance of fulfilment, that to us, who are blest with a knowledge of the Gospel, it is immediately manifest, that the spirit of prophecy was "shewing things which should be hereafter."[1] Unconscious, perhaps, of the full import and distinct application of all which they delivered, "the holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost[2]:" committing themselves to the sacred ecstasies, which possessed their souls, they were borne along on the tide of inspiration into remote developements of the wisdom and the mercy of God; and future ages were to admire and adore the power, which could thus establish its claim to our faith and awe.

Conformably with this account, we find the Prophet Isaiah, in a multitude of instances, speaking of a dispensation, which he characterizes as one of "righteousness and salvation."

It is worthy of remark, that these are terms which he commonly employs; and they occur principally in those passages which the Jewish commentators generally understood as predictions of a Messiah, and which the Christian, therefore, needs not hesitate to apply to the coming of Jesus Christ. I will not here detain you to inquire, to what person, in the scenic representations of prophecy, the present declaration may most fitly be assigned; whether the Prophet be speaking as from himself, or in the person of the expected Messiah, or whether (which I hold to be the best opinion) we should assign it to the leader of a sacred band of teachers, who in after-times were to publish the truths of the everlasting Gospel. The context and the general purport of the prophecy favour this interpretation; and in another place[3] Zion and Jerusalem are designated as the sources of Gospel truth. Sufficient, however, is it for my present purpose, that this is the event contemplated, whatever be the character of the speaker, and not an extension through

[1] Rev. iv. 1. [2] 2 Peter, i. 21. [3] Isaiah, xl. 9.

remote regions of the imperfect revelation, which had already been vouchsafed to man. Righteousness and salvation were, indeed, of the Jews, "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."[1] But in no other view of the subject could their claim to the passage be established. The righteousness which came by the law, was exceedingly defective, when compared with that of the Gospel, and the salvation, which it held out was no other than an obscure anticipation of the mercies and the merits of him, who "by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."[2] I know not, then, that I can afford more useful employment to your present leisure, than by calling to your notice the leading excellencies of our holy faith under these two points of view, in connection with the exercise of that Christian zeal, which endeavours to extend its influence and its blessings. If the religion, which we profess, be righteousness and salvation, in a sense, which is not true of any other mode of faith, we shall not rest, till they "go forth as brightness, and shine as a lamp that burneth;" and we humbly hope that the blessing of God will be upon our Zion, from which such irradiations of Divine light shall beam upon a benighted world.

I. The view, then, under which we are first to consider the religion of Jesus is, that it is righteousness. The original term in the language of the Prophet and the other writers of the Old Testament is of wide extent, and is used in various acceptations: but they are all of them of kindred import, and seem capable of being traced to one primitive meaning; and that is *truth*. In this very Prophet[3], we find that the truth of God is called his righteousness: "I the Lord speak righteousness: I have sworn by myself: the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return;" and the Psalmist has said of the false tongue, that "it hath loved to talk of lies more than of righteousness."[4] Closely connected with the truth of God is the *justice* of his dealings with mankind; a connection which is marked in that exclamation of the Psalmist, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."[5] But righteousness is also the homage paid to the Divine perfections in the exercise of *piety* and *virtue*: as

[1] Rom. ix. 5. [2] Heb. x. 14. [3] Isaiah, xlv. 19. 23.
[4] Psalm lii. 4. [5] Psalm xix. 9.

when "sinners" are spoken of in contradistinction to "the congregation of the righteous."[1] We also find the term used to signify *compassion*; as when it is said, "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness[2];" where the LXX have explained the latter term by a word, which in the New Testament is used to express charity and alms. In like manner, alms are denominated by St. Paul the "fruits of righteousness."[3] But an eminent sense of the word is one, which is purely prophetic, and of which the full import could not have been known, unless prophetically, till after the appearance of Christ: I mean that in which the Prophet Jeremiah announced, that God would raise up to David a righteous Branch, whose name should be called "the Lord our righteousness[4];" the same, who, according to the Apostle, is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."[5] One character, therefore, which the Prophet has in my text assigned to the Gospel dispensation, may be taken as comprising its strict congruity with the truth, the justice, and the mercy of God, displayed in one grand and perfect law of faith and obedience propounded to his rational creatures; and in default of their compliance with it, a remedy against the natural consequences. I should not have troubled you with any thing of so little general interest, as an inquiry into the meaning of a word, if it had not seemed likely to open to us some interesting views of our holy faith.

First, I would entreat your attention to the *righteousness* of the Gospel, considering the term as equivalent to *truth*. Amidst this bewildered and bewildering scene of human life, where without Revelation man is left in utter ignorance of what it most concerns him to know, it might seem to be the first object of his heart to discover God; to have access to the fountain of light and truth; or at least to be favoured with a transient glimpse of order and design, in what must otherwise appear to resolve itself into destiny or chance. What am I, and whither am I going? For what end was I sent into existence, and what is the condition of my being? What is it within me, which thus inquires, and hopes, and fears, and feels? In what relation do I stand towards him,

[1] Psalm i. 6. [2] Isaiah, i. 27. [3] 2 Cor. ix. 10.
[4] Jerem. xxiii. 5, 6. [5] 1 Cor. i. 30.

from whom this wondrous scene of things must have first proceeded? Or am I in any measure an object of his care? Such questions it might be imagined could hardly fail to press themselves on our unaided reason, even where there were little hope that they would ever be resolved. But of these, and of many similar enquiries, the solution is offered us in the Gospel; and all that is requisite is, that we be fully persuaded of its truth. Consider, then, what are its pretensions to this character. It is the boast of Christianity, that it is the religion of the most enlightened portion of the human race; of the inquisitive, the acute, and the learned: who may be expected to require better evidence for their faith than such as would satisfy the slaves of superstition, under whose withering influence the very germs of intellect are blighted, and enquiry is forbidden. Nor is such evidence of the truth of the Gospel withholden from those who seek it. To enter into a detail of it, is plainly incompatible with my present limits or design: all, which they admit, is only to offer you a few general remarks on its peculiar character and extent. You will observe, that the character of the evidence is peculiar: we do not maintain, that the Bible is true, because it is so ancient, that nothing is recorded or known of its original; nor does it rest on the authority of any individual, however pure his life and doctrine, professing to have been favoured with visions from God. But we say that it is true, because we know the history of it from the beginning; a history, which is abundantly corroborated by collateral testimony; and because, if any single book of it could be shown to be partially corrupt, or even wholly spurious, the main fabric would still subsist in all its strength. But this supposition in the case of the Bible can hardly have place. The Scriptures are not a collection of rhapsodies couched in unmeaning generalities, so contrived as to elude every ordinary test of truth: almost every page of them refers us to persons, to time, and to place: the Bible is much too circumstantial in all its details, and deals too much in facts and things, to be consistent with imposture. But it is not merely on historical support that the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures, and the truth of our religion, rest. Whence came the lessons of original wisdom conveyed in the teaching of Christ and his apostles, if not from God? Say not from man, if invention confessedly human has never

produced any thing at all comparable or similar. — How is it that the books of Scripture, though written by so many authors, extending through a period of fifteen hundred years, all relate to one great design, which pervades the whole, and is gradually developed from the fall of Adam to the coming of Jesus Christ; unless one directing and controlling spirit had influenced their minds? — Whence happens it, that the Jews, though dispersed through every region upon the earth, and retaining nothing of their former state, but their customs and their religion, are still preserved, unless as witnesses to the genuineness of those writings, which predict the coming of the Messiah, though a judicial blindness prevents them from perceiving, that the "Man of sorrows," on whom the Lord was "to lay the iniquity of us all[1]," is already come? Again, look at the conduct of the apostles *before* and *after* the resurrection of Christ, the ignorant, the weak, and timid fishermen, who forsook him and fled, and the enlightened, the eloquent, the intrepid preachers, who went into every nation as witnesses of Christ's resurrection, not advocates of an *opinion*, it is important to recollect, but as eye-witnesses of a *fact*. — But further, what would their preaching have availed against the prejudices, the interests, and the passions of mankind, unless it had been assisted by mighty works and signs following? The descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is not more strongly attested by the historian of the Acts of the Apostles, than it is by the whole history of the planting of the Gospel, as deducible from profane records, and by the then circumstances of the world. — Or, lastly, if our religion clear up all the difficulties and embarrassments, which had perplexed the duties and destinies of man; if it may be truly said that life is an enigma, and the Gospel the solution; if it explain the moral phenomena of our condition, in a manner far more satisfactory than any, which had hitherto been attempted, and to which explanation eighteen centuries have added nothing, what is the inference, but that this solution came, as it professes to have come, from God? The Bible, it is true, has its difficulties, and they were reasonably to be expected; though there are some, who allow their faith to be shaken, if they meet

[1] Isaiah, liii. 3. 6.

with any thing which they cannot explain: but I will venture to remind them, that there is one difficulty much greater than any to which they object, and to which the ingenuity of scepticism ought first to be directed: that, which I allude to is, how are we to account for the existence of the vast body of evidence, or if they please, of presumptions, in behalf of Christianity, unless we admit religion to be true? Has there ever been known in the world, or can the mind conceive, a falsehood supported by such a variety of arguments and illustrations, of proofs both direct and incidental, generally independent of each other, yet all tending to a given point? If any man shall profess to believe, that all this is mere accident, we have a right to conclude that the weakest and most irrational credulity is that of unbelievers.

But I pass from the righteousness of our religion considered as a system of truth, to that character of it which is derived from the justice of God's dealings with mankind, and the homage due to the Divine perfections in the exercise of faith and obedience; in other words, as it is a system of piety and morals. It is, indeed, not unusual to regard these as subjects wholly distinct and independent; a mode of treating them which has been highly injurious to both. The piety, which is habitually negligent of any moral observance, cannot be genuine and sincere, nor have we reason to believe that it will finally be accepted: the same authority which enjoins the love of God enjoins us to love our brother also.[1] On the other hand, there is no real foundation for morals, but genuine piety and faith in Christ. Men may be told of the fitness, and propriety, and beauty of virtue: but in these there is no obligation to practise it, even where it is most easy, and certainly they afford no adequate motive to encounter inconvenience and self-denial. We know but imperfectly what is right, except from the word of God, and we have no sufficient reason to comply with it, except we be actuated by an earnest desire of pleasing the best of Beings, from a reverence for his infinite perfections, from feelings of gratitude and dependence, and from faith in the promises of his Son. Let me, then, present to you, under one aspect, the piety and the morals of our holy religion, as they are com-

[1] 1 John, iv. 21.

bined, and beautifully harmonize, in the features of the Christian life. In the character of him who takes the Gospel for the standard of duty, and has deeply imbibed its spirit in his heart, there will be no visible distinction made in favour of such observances, as may happen to fall in with his natural temperament, or be more especially insisted on in the world: the religious and the moral habit will be distinguishable from each other, only by the objects to which they are specifically directed: both will proceed from the same principle, and be exerted under the same influence, in one uniform course of action and sentiment. The Christian will be consistent with himself; and whatever he may do or meditate, whether it refer to its secret intercourse with the Father of Spirits, or to the ordinary duties or business of life, the influencing principle will be the same, and in all the various applications of it will be resolvable into self-devotion to the revealed will of God.

It can hardly be requisite to press upon your attention the exclusive advantages which the righteousness of our Zion, thus considered as a rule of life, possesses over the celebrated systems of paganism. Not to insist upon their utter want of evidence as systems of truth, they are equally defective as systems of faith and moral obedience. This assertion might be established at much greater length than the time will permit; but there is one difference, by which they are distinguished in their mode of operation, from the Christian faith, which, as pervading all of them, may deserve your notice; I mean, that under whatever form they exhibit the Divinity, he is still merely an object of terror: fear is the only principle which actuates the worshipper; fear it is, which offers the sacrifice, and piety is but penance and suffering: the delight experienced in the contemplation of the Divine mercies seems to be unknown: and after all our researches into the sacred books of the heathen, which seem indeed to be directed by Providence to the confirmation of our faith in Christ, it will probably remain peculiar to the Gospel to have declared, in the comprehensive sense of Scripture, that "God is love."[1] The religion of the Old Testament was in some measure a religion of fear; and with reference to pagan systems, in more than one of the ancient languages, fear and

[1] I John, iv. 16.

superstitious worship, having been observed to be kindred feelings, are designated by kindred terms: idols were denominated Terrors[1]: whereas it is the privilege of the disciples of Christ to "serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their lives."[2]

Consider, then, what is the natural operation of this defect of paganism upon the mind and heart of the worshipper. Under every mode of religious belief, the character of man will greatly depend upon his notions of God; and the devotion paid to the gods of paganism will differ from that of the Christian, as the obedience extorted by the dread of a gloomy and capricious despot will fall short of the cheerful service, which anticipates the wishes of a master whom we love. Under the influence of mere terror, the virtues of man will be rather negations of what may be supposed to provoke displeasure, than a warm desire to obtain favour by running in the path of positive commandments. Fear will endeavour to hide itself from God, while love will seek communion with him, and to be "like unto him[3]," and will desire to be admitted to his presence. "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect[4]," could never be preached with effect or meaning to the votaries of a thrilling superstition. It is true, indeed, that fear is among the motives by which the Gospel would retain man in a sense of duty; but it is only a restraining principle, and is no where represented as that which principally operates on the heart of the children of God. "The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom[5]," and there are many who never advance beyond it: but "perfect love," as the Apostle assures us, "casteth out fear[6]," and is gradually matured in that "spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."[7]

A third view of the righteousness of the Gospel is that in which righteousness is equivalent to charity and mercy; in which it embraces the wants and the weaknesses of the human race, without reference to nation, or climate, or language, or caste; and is as comprehensive in its views as we should expect a religion to be, which emanates from the truth of God, and offers to mankind a perfect rule of life.

[1] See 2 Kings, xvii. 16. xviii. 14. xxiii. 6. 13., in the Syriac version.
[2] Luke, i 74. [3] 1 John, iii. 2. [4] Matth. v. 48.
[5] Prov. ix. 10. [6] 1 John, iv. 18. [7] Rom. viii. 15

It may indeed be affirmed that Christianity is the only religious system, which from its nature and spirit is adapted to universal reception; and this very circumstance, if it be established, is of itself no slight presumption, that it alone came from God: of course I except the Mosaic law, which was only a shadow of things to come. One prevailing mode of faith neither seeks nor admits converts, as if mercy were not interested in diffusing what it supposes to be truth; while another has made converts by the sword, as if truth superseded the feelings of mercy: but in the faith of Jesus, and in it alone, "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other."[1] View your religion, then, as concerned for the happiness of all who live: view it as dispensing knowledge to the ignorant, health to the sick, food to the hungry, and consolation to them that mourn; requiring no observance, which is not practicable in every clime and in every age, under every form of government, and in every condition of mankind; not interwoven with particular civil institutions or local habits, apart from which it cannot subsist, but seeking all, loving all, and suited to all.

These are the characters of truth, of mercy, and of universality; and let it be remembered, that they subsist together only in the religion of Jesus Christ.

The last sense which I assigned to the original term translated "righteousness" is that in which we become righteous, only through the obedience of Jesus Christ.[2] In this sense, however, the subject is so intimately blended with the method of salvation, that I shall at once proceed to that remaining character of our holy faith assigned to it by the Prophet, and consider the two together.

II. Under this head a very different view is opened to us of the condition of man. We have considered our religion as a system of truth, as a rule of life, and as peculiarly marked by charity and mercy: but truth might have been limited to the present scene of things; a rule of life, however perfect, might have had no reference to any thing beyond it; and mercy and charity might have been inculcated, to soothe the sorrows of a transient existence, and have led to no further results. Thus imperfect would have been our religion,

[1] Psalm lxxxv. 10. [2] Rom. v. 19.

however admirable in other respects, if it had not brought immortality to light, and made known to us the method of salvation. Suffer me, then, while I compress into a narrow compass a few of the most important truths which relate to the doctrine of the righteousness which is by faith, or salvation through Jesus Christ: a doctrine to which the whole of the Christian revelation tends, and beyond which the mind of man can hardly conceive that any revelation can be requisite: the Divine Author of our faith was also its finisher[1], and has left no plea of its imperfection, or the possibility of further improvement, to any who should come after him, asserting the character of being commissioned to impart a further revelation from God.

The doctrine of our salvation by Christ alone, is founded entirely on the weakness and corruption of human nature; and these ought to be so evident to our understandings, as to be admitted without hesitation. Are the truths of religion, however clearly apprehended, readily received into the heart? Is the pure and perfect law of the Gospel, while we admit and proclaim its excellence, uniformly obeyed? Or are charity and mercy, while every tongue is telling of their praise, consistently practised? If in any of these the best of us are found to fail, to what shall we impute the failure, if not to our weakness? To that strange and perverse principle within us, which knows what is right, yet does frequently what is wrong; which resolves, and forgets its resolutions, and repents, and sins again.

There is, then, no reasonable plea for the self-sufficiency of man: and to talk of our own merits as a title to eternal happiness, impious as it must appear to the Christian, is scarcely less inconsistent with the condition of human nature. What have we, which we did not receive? And of that, which we have received, what has been the application? It were endless to detail the weaknesses of the heart, in neglected opportunities of doing good, in slighted means of grace, in the omissions of duty, and the breach of positive commandments, in thanklessness for mercies received, and in contempt of warnings, and in the thousand failings, which force themselves on the notice of every man, in moments of

[1] Heb. xii. 2.

severe reflection. In this state of things, the rational as well as the pious mind, in seeking to be delivered from the body of death, will, with the Apostle, "thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord[1]:" he will adore the justice, he will bless the mercy of the Being, who has thus reconciled a world unto himself, superseding sacrifices, and pilgrimages, and penance, and the whole train of unavailing expiations, to which a consciousness of guilt had driven the natural fears of man, by one efficacious and universal atonement.

It is, then, the glory and the crown of Christianity, that it teaches the doctrine of salvation; and the method by which this is to be obtained is through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. By faith in his atoning sacrifice, his righteousness becomes our own: through his merits our sincere, though imperfect, obedience, is accepted of God; and we are encouraged to hope that our frailties will be forgiven, if we sin not "that grace may abound."[2]

To which of the masters of pagan wisdom shall we have recourse for discoveries so important and conclusive, as those which are contained in a few sentences of Scripture? "Christ bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness."[3] "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."[4] "God hath made him to be sin (that is, a sin-offering,) for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."[5] What declarations are these, brethren, and what views do they open to us of human life? Before them the unsubstantial speculations of mere philosophy, the theories of the acute and the disquisitions of the learned, the pride which is prompted by our boasted strength, and the despair suggested by our conscious weakness, at once vanish from the mind and heart, and leave them to be occupied by admiration, by gratitude, by devotion, and by love. And thus it is, that the righteousness, to which man attains only by faith in Christ, instead of being, as some vainly imagine, distinct from obedience, becomes a principle deeply operative on the human character, and while it saves us through the power of God, purifies us and subdues us to his holy will. Neither in the achievement of the work of our

[1] Rom. vii. 24. [2] Rom. vi. 1. [3] Pet. ii. 24.
[4] Gal. iii. 13. [5] 2 Cor. v. 21.

salvation are we left to ourselves. The same revelation, which has proclaimed to us a Redeemer, has assured us of a Comforter and a Guide: the gracious assistances of the Holy Spirit are vouchsafed to all who ask them in fervent and humble prayer, dispensing a benign though secret influence through the human breast, restraining the corruption and sinfulness of our nature, suggesting to us good desires, increasing in us true religion, and drawing us daily nearer unto God.

In behalf of a faith, so well established by the evidences of its truth, so beneficial in its influence, so sublime in its discoveries, and so comprehensive in its views, the holy Prophet has expressed his zeal in the fervid language of my text: — "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

It were not easy to find a Christian assembly more capable of feeling the force of this sentiment than that which I now address: the efforts which are now made, within the limits of this government, for propagating the faith of righteousness and salvation are probably, in proportion to the means afforded, without a parallel in the modern history of the East.

It is not, then, to excite in you a disposition, which already subsists, that I advert to this topic, but merely to offer you some suggestions in relation to it, with which I will conclude.

The different nations, to whom this island has at different periods been subject, to say nothing of the zeal which at present animates all classes of Christians in the mother-country, have naturally introduced among you very different denominations of Christianity; all of them, however, actuated, no doubt, by the same desire of diffusing truth. To honour and esteem those who may differ from us in particular points, yet "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity[1]," is a duty, which needs not be inculcated upon any, who are themselves of that number. Still, however, there are dangers, from which, in this state of things, the cause of the Gospel is not secure. Our National Church has no tenets either of doctrine or of discipline which are peculiar to herself: they are held

[1] Eph. vi. 24.

in common with some or most of the existing churches, and may all of them be traced to the primitive ages of the Gospel: a little more, or a little less, in this or that particular, is for the most part all that is demanded by those who differ from her. In the utter impossibility of adapting herself to the views of every class of Christians, it is still a subject of satisfaction to reflect, that the moderation of her principles render her, upon the whole, so fit to be the basis, on which you may rear in these regions the fabric of the Christian faith. I am not contending for the violation of principle, nor for the abandonment of what any man, on deliberate and deep enquiry, may hold to be essential and indispensable to the preaching of the Gospel: but if there be any thing more especially to be deprecated, it would be, next to the violation of principle, the insisting on what is not really essential, and exhibiting to the people around you the differences and contradictions which usually belong to the character of falsehood, rather than the consistency and unity of truth. For the present, proselytes might be made, perhaps, to almost any denomination of Christianity: but the time must come, when Christian converts will *compare* their opinions; and if they discover any remarkable disagreement in what they severally have been taught, they will infer that even yet all is not right with them, and will either relapse into their former unbelief, or cause divisions in the church of Christ. My counsel, to you, then, is that of the Apostle; "Take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak."[1] "Speak the same thing; be joined together in the same mind and the same judgment."[2] And I offer it not from any conviction that already it is needed, but in the way of prevention, and in the spirit of conciliation and love.

The righteousness of our Zion will go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth, so long as her doctrine shall shine with a steady lustre, which is neither dimmed by the mists of error, nor misleads by a change of position, nor distracts by multiplicity.

Lastly, let me remind you, that independently of direct and avowed efforts to extend the faith of righteousness and

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 9. [2] 1 Cor. i. 10.

salvation, one thing is still indispensable to their success: the general habits of society, and the force of individual example, must aid the labours of the preacher and the missionary, or it will be in vain that they "dispute and persuade the things concerning the kingdom of God." [1] The most fatal discrepancy which the native could detect would be a disagreement between the doctrines and the practice of our religion; and no zeal in contributing to Christian institutions would at all compensate for the want of Christian example, or any prevalent irregularities in life and deportment, in those who name the name of Christ. The righteousness of our faith must not resemble the coruscations of a meteor, which is viewed for a moment with the gaze of admiration, and then is lost in darkness; it must rather be a pure and placid light, emanating from the heart, which is devoted unto God, and is warmed and illumined by his Holy Spirit. Let it, then, be manifest in every one of you, beloved, that you sincerely embrace the righteousness of the Gospel, its truth, its morals, and its mercy, and that you trust for your salvation to the "Lord our righteousness," even Jesus Christ. With these precautions the cause of your Redeemer will prosper in your hands: all things manifestly conspire to its success; zeal, exertion, liberality, and (what I cannot allow myself to suppress) the sanction of the highest authority and the encouragement of a bright example. May the Almighty bless these means, which he alone could have supplied, and make you instruments of revealing to those, who are still in darkness, the glory of our Zion, that so it may radiate from this favoured spot, and be visible throughout the Eastern world!

[1] Acts, xix. 8.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH,

IN

PRINCE OF WALES'S ISLAND,

On Sunday, May 16. 1819.

By THOMAS FANSHAW,

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

TO

THE HONOURABLE

JOHN ALEXANDER BANNERMAN, Esq.

GOVERNOR OF PRINCE OF WALES'S ISLAND

AND ITS DEPENDENCIES,

THE FOLLOWING SERMON,

MADE PUBLIC AT HIS REQUEST,

IS, WITH MUCH RESPECT AND ESTEEM,

INSCRIBED

BY

HIS OBEDIENT

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

Calcutta,
July 26. 1819.

SERMON, &c.

Only let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel. — Philippians i. 27.

PHILIPPI, a town of Macedonia, was the first place at which St. Paul preached on the continent of Europe; and there, finding numerous converts, he was enabled to establish a Christian church. To this community the present Epistle was addressed. The Apostle was then a prisoner at Rome: the Philippians, sensible of the blessings, which they enjoyed under the Gospel, and actuated by feelings of gratitude and commiseration towards him, from whom they had derived these blessings, sent a messenger to administer to his necessities: and to acknowledge this act of kindness was the Apostle's immediate object in writing to the Philippians. It was, however, to be expected from such a man as St. Paul, that he would avail himself of the opportunity thus afforded him of giving them fresh proofs of his regard, by endeavouring to confirm them in their faith, by enforcing anew the doctrines of the Gospel, and by offering them such pastoral admonitions, as he conceived their present state to demand. It was highly probable, that he might never see them again: to this circumstance he refers in my text; but present or absent, he should feel a solicitude for their Christian welfare: and he gives them in the mean time such counsel, as their welfare, in his judgment, required.

Different as are the circumstances of the Christian world in modern times, especially in countries where our religion is fully established, it is yet difficult for *us* to read such passages

as my text, and many others in the writings of the apostles, without some application of them to the condition of the church in India. We are here, for the most part, small societies dispersed through a territory of vast extent: the Christian churches already existing in the lifetime of St. Paul probably did not occupy so wide a field, as do our English churches in this quarter of the globe: there is, indeed, one point of difference, which is sufficiently obvious; the former arose and subsisted under every discouragement, and were exposed to hostility and persecution; while we, on the contrary, have nothing to dread from the heathen around us, but are ourselves the ruling power. This difference, however, though in other points of view, it carries with it important considerations, affects not the application of my text; to you at this moment, as it was then to the Philippians, every clause of it may be suitably addressed: prosperity and independence have their trials, as well as adversity and depression: and I may fitly exhort you to "let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ," that so I may hear of your "standing fast in one spirit, and with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

There are, however, circumstances in this Christian settlement, which impart to it, if things always infinitely important admit degrees, a more than ordinary interest. What was this island only a few years since, but a blank in the moral creation? Its hills and its forests served only to exhibit to the mariner a scene of wild and cheerless grandeur, as he passed the inhospitable shore: no associations dear to the mind were awakened at the approach; the charities and the arts of civilized life were here unknown; here man, even in his rudest state, had as yet no fixed abode. How altered is now the scene! a numerous and increasing population; — an active and beneficent government; — streets resounding with the occupations of industry; — cultivated fields and thriving plantations; — residences bespeaking comfort and opulence; — our arts, our language, and our laws introduced into this remote corner of the East; — these surprising changes invite reflection, and cannot be contemplated with indifference. But, what it is even more to my purpose to remark, and without which all else were unsubstantial, our holy faith is here established, to guide those, who know the truth, in the

way of salvation, and to be a light to lighten the Gentiles around, if haply they may be turned from their vanities to the Living God: and you have here an edifice fully adequate to your Christian population, and in point of decency, and even of elegance, worthy of the flourishing and powerful body, by whom it was erected; it is now dedicated unto God; and some of the most solemn ordinances of religion have already been administered within its walls.[1]

In a state of things, then, in which the dispensations of Providence are so remarkable, I cannot forbear to press upon you the counsel, which the blessed apostle offered to his Philippians: and you will best be enabled to comprehend and to apply it, by considering it in its separate clauses: his exhortation is generally, "Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ:" but this he subsequently explains to refer more particularly to their "standing fast in one spirit, and with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel:" in other words, he makes a conversation worthy of the Gospel to shew itself more especially in Christian unity and Christian zeal.

What, however, is the conversation, which becometh the Gospel of Christ? The meaning of the apostle is not given in our common translation with the utmost precision: the term here employed is wholly different from that, which is elsewhere used to signify *demeanour* or *conduct*; as a "holy conversation," (2 Pet. iii. 11.) "a conversation without covetousness," (Heb. xiii. 5.) and other similar expressions:[2] and the difference is not unimportant: the strict meaning of the apostle is, "Be ye such members of the community to which ye belong, as your religion requires you to be;" or, "Let your society be actuated by principles worthy of the Gospel of Christ:" he is not here addressing the Philippian converts as unconnected individuals, but in their collective relation to each other: and this exactly agrees with what follows: that so he may hear of their "standing fast in *one*

[1] A confirmation was holden at Prince of Wales's Island on Saturday, 8th May.

[2] In this epistle iii. 20. we read in our common version "Our conversation is in heaven." Beza and others, including Schleusner, would render it "our *citizenship*;" which is certainly right: but the original of this passage differs from that of the text, only in using the noun for its cognate verb.

spirit, and *striving together* for the faith of the Gospel." He is, therefore, in this place contemplating the Philippians as a Christian society, who should in all respects act, as becomes such a society, especially in the particulars of unity and zeal: and it is in this, the true sense of the text, that I mean to apply it on the present occasion.

I. We shall have formed but a very inadequate notion of the influence of religion, if we do not perceive, that a truly Christian community will have its appropriate character, its own distinctive marks. Societies may, indeed, be formed upon any of the principles, which appeal to the reason or the passions of man; and common principles and common laws are all which are required to hold them together. But a Christian community differs from all others, in respect of the principles, by which its members are actuated, and the laws to which they yield obedience. To be, then, a community such as becomes the Gospel of Christ, you have only to inquire, what are the principles, which distinguish our religion, and what are those holy and beneficent laws, to which it would subdue the human heart!

The basis of all Christian society must be faith in Christ: the heart must be sensible of its weakness and its wants, and of the utter insufficiency of man to his own well-being: the conscious need of a Saviour, and a thankful acceptance of pardon and peace as offered in the Gospel, are indispensable to the genuine Christian character, and of course to qualify and dispose men to be members of a really Christian community. It is true, indeed, that this faith will not be equally strong and active in all, who have been admitted to the Christian covenant: and in the visible church of Christ, there will be many, who as yet know not the things, which concern their peace. Still, faith in the Son of God was the principle on which Christians were first brought together: and they in whom this principle is weak or wanting, though found within the Christian pale, are not of the class of persons, by whom Christian communities were originally formed, nor of those, by whom the objects of such a community can be fully appreciated. And in close connection with faith in a Saviour is our conviction, that we need the succours of the Holy Spirit: both rest alike on the word of God, and of both the necessity is made apparent by a consciousness of human corruption.

But in the train of this faith, and of a cordial adoption of all that is revealed and enforced in the Scriptures, I beseech you to consider what has followed: the same faith has united men in the same form of discipline and worship: churches were built, in which they might profess their common belief, and offer a common homage to the Father of Jesus Christ; and thus were they brought to live together under the same spiritual guidance and government, having the same Gospel preached to them, profiting by mutual edification, affording a mutual comfort and support, and cemented together by an intercourse of charity and love. It were, indeed, too much to expect that any Christian community at the present day, except in circumstances resembling those of the primitive Christians, should exactly correspond with such a model: men are brought together by motives in which Christian considerations have little or no share: they go to the spot, to which Providence calls them, as interest or connection points the way. Still it will be useful to keep in view the principles, on which Christian societies were originally formed, if we would clearly apprehend, what, even in the ordinary circumstances of the world, should be the character of a community, such as "becometh the Gospel of Christ." It is certain that the Gospel will not be honoured, where its excellence is not illustrated and exemplified, or its influence is but partially felt. Is there a Christian community, in which its grand and leading truths are depreciated, or but imperfectly understood? In which moral decency and common integrity pass for religion? In which men confound the laws of civil society with the more operative and extensive injunctions of the Gospel, and narrow the range of revelation to the limits of human reason? In such habits and sentiments wherever they prevail, the faith of the Redeemer is not honoured, but disparaged: it is not perceived or felt, that the mercy, the power, and the justice of God have been wonderfully exerted, and were actually required, in the salvation of a fallen race. In like manner, is the Sabbath desecrated, and the house of prayer deserted, while business or recreation occupies the hours, which should be given to the worship of God and to holy meditation? Are the prevailing habits irregular and worldly, if not absolutely dissolute and depraved? Are men, though living together in the same place, uncon-

nected with each other by the ties of good-will and charity? In short, is any community in great measure deficient in those characters of piety and mutual benevolence, which are inseparable from a sincere profession of the Gospel? It is plain, that in all such instances there is much need of reform. It may be said, indeed, that I am here speaking of Christian communities, as having for the most part a prevailing character: I conceive this to be the fact; especially where, as in this country, they are separated from the mass of Christians: every where a great diversity will be found among individuals; but still there will be a prevailing character either of good or evil; the general aspect of such communities will be either that they are Christian in faith, in life, and in deportment, or the contrary: a few exceptions will not change it. The opinions, the habits, and the example of those, who take the lead, are no where without effect, and least of all in such bodies of men as those, to which I have alluded. What, then, is a community, generally speaking, such as "becometh the Gospel of Christ?" To convey to you an adequate idea of it would require me to expatiate on the power of religion upon the habits, the sentiments, and the tempers of men. In such a society the excellence of our faith will be illustrated in the lives of its professors: the benevolent observer will find with delight, that there the truth is received and honoured "as it is in Jesus;" Eph. iv. 21: that all holy ordinances are revered, while secular duties are not neglected; more especially, that men forsake not the table of their Redeemer; that the Sabbath is really solemnized as a day of holy rest; that they enter the house of God with awe, and that decency and order are not violated by listless inattention, or irreverent and idle gestures: that they who rule are just and beneficent, while the governed yield a cheerful submission; that the relation between the Pastor and his flock, one of the most endearing relations in society, is maintained in a parental vigilance on the one hand, and in an affectionate respect on the other; that the rich are liberal and the poor thankful; that institutions for the relief of misery are well patronized, and what is much less common, well superintended; that a neighbourly and friendly intercourse prevails among all of the same class and habits of life; and that men of every condition endeavour faithfully to discharge the duties assigned them by Provi-

dence, whether these be eminent or humble. I say not that such a community is every where to be found; still any thing far short of this becometh not the Gospel of Christ.

II. But following the example of the apostle, I am to speak upon one or two points more particularly: he was especially anxious to hear of his Philippians, that they "stood fast in one spirit." Powerful as is the influence of the Gospel in reforming the dispositions and tempers of men, yet the corruption of our nature still remains; and societies professedly Christian are not unfrequently at variance in themselves, and divided into parties and sects: among the devices of the enemy of man, none perhaps has been more effectual or more pernicious: selfishness in all its forms, as pride, vanity, false honour, a quick sense of wrong, and a love of power or ascendancy, is a principle which is easily roused into action: and wherever these operate, Christian communities exhibit a spectacle little becoming the Gospel of peace.

Foremost in the sad catalogue of divisions stand those which turn upon questions of religion: some men revolt from every thing connected with order and establishment: some, who have need to learn, are more ready to teach: some seem to derive consequence from being the leaders of a party: and others are actually deceived, believing interpretations of Scripture, which are unsupported by the letter, or by the general tenor of the word of God, to be the true, though hidden sense, revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. Under this head happily, so far as I am informed, I have nothing to apprehend for you at present: but if my solicitude for you be in any thing predominant, it is that this "little flock" of Christ, this infant colony of the Church of England, may ever "stand fast in one spirit, and through God's grace resist every attempt, should any such be made, to divide it: every hope of good to be derived from it hereafter would be defeated by a difference among yourselves. But then, beloved, let me caution you against the easy mistake, that you are standing fast in one spirit, if in truth you are sunk into indifference: men are apt to believe that they agree in religion, and even take credit to themselves for the agreement, when the subject does not sufficiently interest them, to afford any cause of dissension. Unity is, indeed, precious in the sight of God, and lovely in the eyes of men: but remember, that

religious unity supposes that we are really religious: in no other case does it deserve the name: and in candour I must admit, that better are differences, where all are in earnest, than the mere semblance of Christian agreement, where the great and vital doctrines of the Gospel are little regarded. Happily, such a state of things, however it may incidentally arise, is not induced or promoted, far otherwise, by the system of faith and worship adopted in our National Church. Our liturgy is a luminous comment on the Gospel; its devotions breathe the spirit of the Gospel: the great and saving truths of the Gospel are prominent in every page of it: you are in no danger of becoming lukewarm as to the doctrines of redemption and grace, while you hold fast to the liturgy; and as little are you exposed to the danger of division, while you reverence the primitive form of discipline retained in our church.

But in the collisions of human society, differences will sometimes arise, where weighty questions do not come into discussion, upon matters of little moment. With regard, however, to *you*, I hardly know what these can be: I have good hope that none such at present exist: and my counsel for the future will be, that you cultivate generally a spirit of forbearance, of concession, of courtesy, of mutual kindness; that you abstain from evil speaking, and from unwarranted suspicions; that you be candid to real faults and failings, and remember, that even injuries must be forgiven. I cannot contemplate such a society as yours otherwise than as one family, among the members of which there is really but little collision of interest, and nothing which needs greatly disturb the gentle current of brotherly love.

III. But Christian unity is not the only object, to which the apostle particularly turns your attention: he insists upon the duty of Christian zeal; for this virtue cannot be more forcibly enjoined than in the expression of "striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Christians, indeed, cannot be in earnest, they cannot really appreciate the blessings of religion, or at any rate cannot be actuated by benevolence, if they have no wish to extend those blessings to others: nay more, they must be strangers to that great and holy principle, the desire of promoting the glory of God. He who knows nothing of these things, has abundant cause to ask himself,

whether he be really influenced by any sentiment of reverence to the Almighty, or of love towards man. Mere zeal, however, without regulation or restraint, is but a capricious and dangerous thing: to be useful, it must act upon system, and be tempered with sobriety: the wild sallies of individual warmth are often mischievous: we are commanded "to strive together:" and I cannot do better than to advert to the points, which seem in your instance to be most effectual to the end in view.

You cannot more usefully strive together for the faith of the Gospel, than in the open and consistent profession of it: this is indispensable, whatever be your other exertions: and where is this profession to be made? Chiefly, though not exclusively, within these walls: here you prove to each other, that you take an interest in the maintenance of religion: that you are solicitous to uphold its cause; that you yourselves are sensible of the blessings dispensed by it; that you hear the word of God with satisfaction, and join in the devotion of the church with comfort: that you hallow the Christian Sabbath, in one of its most sacred obligations; and that however it may be desecrated by others, you yourselves are on the side of Christian piety and social order, and are ready to give to both the weight of your influence and example. It ought, indeed, to excite in you feelings of gratitude to Almighty God, that in this remote and secluded spot you have the means of thus assembling in all the decency of our national worship: how many of our countrymen are denied this privilege? for a privilege it will be deemed by those, who have not yet learnt to live without God. Great, therefore, would be my regret to hear, that after all which has been done, the attendance at this place was irregular and partial: nor would the mischief rest with yourselves: surrounded as you are with those, who as yet have no knowledge of Christ, you must make your religion visible: and of nothing will they be more easily informed, than whether you repair on every seventh day to the house of the living God, or whether this sacred edifice has been dedicated to him in vain.

Another object, to which I would direct your Christian zeal, though out of this it originated, is the provision, which, with the liberal aid of the government, you have made for the instruction of youth. In no other way do Christians

more effectually "strive together for the faith of the Gospel," than in training the children of the poor in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." From an institution, which is still in its infancy, and has been subject to local difficulties, very much perhaps was not yet to be expected: some good has assuredly been done, and more is in progress: and I know not of any permanent impediment to its exhibiting hereafter all the improvements, the arrangement, the facility, the precision, and the benign moral effect on the minds of the scholars, which are so conspicuous in the *National System*, as now practised in England. I commend, then, this institution to your continued patronage and care: let it be an object of your warmest zeal: it is not easy to estimate its eventual importance: at any rate, great blessings will assuredly be imparted to the children themselves: but its influence may be of wider extent: this island is an advanced post of civilization to the eastward: from this little seminary it may be the purpose of the Almighty, in his own good time, to send forth those, who shall disseminate a knowledge of his attributes and of the way of salvation. we presume not, indeed, to fathom his counsels: but we humbly hope for his blessing, while we employ the appointed means, leaving to his wisdom the issue.

There is but one other point of this nature, to which I will advert, and on which the little I have to offer, is less in the way of exhortation than of acknowledgment. I have thought it my duty to suggest the formation at this place, of a *District Committee of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*, similar to the committees established in other parts of this diocese: and the suggestion, I am bound to add, has been received with a cordiality, which while it demands my thanks, promises the happiest consequences. I am not, then, asking for this establishment a more general support than has already been pledged to it: my wish is only to declare its objects, and to make it more efficient, as these become generally known. By means of this ancient society and its distant committees, not only bibles, but prayer books, and approved elementary treatises and easy tracts upon all subjects connected with the doctrines, the ordinances, and the duties of our religion, are provided for those who need them. It is true, that the field of operation for such an establishment is not here as yet very extensive; yet will it not be without its

use. Every poor Christian will be an object of its regard: if any be sick or in prison, he will demand especial attention: the school will be supplied with all the books used by the *National Society*: every English soldier, who may be quartered on the island, and every English sailor, who visits your shores, may be benefited by the committee's bounty, and possibly may date, as many have done, the commencement of an altered course of life from the day when his thoughts were thus first turned to the subject of salvation: and the diligent exertions of individuals, whether members or not, to ascertain where books are wanted, will be in the truest sense, "a striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Much, however, of what I have remarked of your school, will apply to this institution: its position will give it a more than ordinary importance: it will be the society's remotest station to the eastward: and it may look with the Divine blessing, to further openings and a wider sphere: already I am authorized to indulge these hopes in the prompt and unreserved support of the highest authority at a neighbouring settlement. [1]

It is now time that I take my leave of you, although some topics, connected with the present occasion, may remain untouched: all Christian graces and virtues, indeed, all which belongs to faith, to piety, to order, and to peace, must work together in forming a Christian community, which shall do honour to the Gospel of Christ. To all these I beseech the the Being, "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy," to incline your hearts; and that he will "nourish you with all goodness, and of his great mercy keep you in the same." Vast as is the extent of this diocese, and various as are the duties imposed upon me, I must not hope, even if life be spared me for some years to come, to be an eye-witness of your progress; but though absent, I shall endeavour to "hear of your affairs;" and I trust, that what I shall hear, will afford me satisfaction and comfort; that so my visit to this place may be associated in my mind with something even more gratifying than your personal attention and kind-

[1] The *Prince of Wales's Island and Fort Marlborough District Committee of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*, held its constituent meeting on Tuesday, the 18th May. The Governor of Prince of Wales's Island consented to become its President, and presented, on behalf of the government, a very liberal contribution to its funds: a similar donation was afterwards received from the honourable Sir T. S. Raffles, the Lieut. Governor of Fort Marlborough.

ness; I mean your advancement as a Christian community, and the probable extension, through your means, of the kingdom of Christ. We will now proceed to the table of our Redeemer: to which, as being on the point of leaving you, I have called you by a special invitation, there to draw still closer these ties of Christian love, and to ask the succours of Divine grace, that we may in all things approve ourselves unto God our Saviour.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED IN

ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH, BOMBAY,

BEFORE THE SOCIETY FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE POOR,

On the 18*th March*, 1821,

BEING THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT;

BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND

THOMAS FANSHAW,

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

RESOLVED. — *That the cordial thanks of the Education Society be presented to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, patron of the institution, for the very appropriate sermon preached by him in its behalf on Sunday last; and that his Lordship be requested to allow the same to be printed.*

H. DAVIES,

Secretary.

March 19, 1821.

A

SERMON, &c.

Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction. — MATT. vii. 13.

To the reflecting mind hardly any truths are more deeply interesting than such as relate to the general condition of human life: in these every feeling bosom seems to participate, and every heart, not hardened by sin or sensuality, finds something which comes home to itself. The general condition must be more or less our own: who can be reminded, that the world is full of wretchedness, and not consider that he is destined to pass in that world all the days of his mortal life? or who can listen to observations on the shortness and uncertainty of our present being, and forget, that he himself is standing on the very same precipice, from which daily and hourly so many are seen to fall? The thoughtless and the obdurate may, indeed, be proof against all such applications; and there is a sophistry, by which men persuade themselves, that they at least are exempt from the common lot: but this is not the sane and sober state of the heart and understanding; we are formed by nature to feel; and in the contemplation of the scene around us, self love, left to its natural operation, will teach us to feel for ourselves: every sigh extorted from the wise and good in every age for the condition of humanity, does in fact attest our inherent interest in all that relates to human life: and our sympathies, as the very term implies, are but involuntary acknowledgments, that whatever concerns our common nature, touches some chord within ourselves; some emotion is awakened within us, when the system is not greatly disordered, whenever solemn truths are enounced, which apply not simply to individuals, but universally to man.

It should seem then, that no heart not altogether become

callous, can be unmoved with the awful declaration conveyed in the text, proceeding as it does from perfect wisdom, and a divine insight into all which respects our condition. According to this oracle, what a world is it, in which we are placed! We are journeying, it seems, either to life or to destruction; to happiness or to eternal perdition: but "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;" whereas "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:" through one or other of these gates, however, all must pass; the entrance by the one is difficult, while that by the other is accomplished without effort: the "way is broad, and the gate is wide," and the number of those who enter thereat, is declared to be proportionate. And can any of us regard such a representation of human life without concern? It is obvious, and it should seem almost impossible not to ask ourselves, whether we are travelling on the wide road at our ease, or labouring along the narrow path, which alone conducts us to life? Independently of inquiry, the probability is that we have not found the path of life, as this is the lot of few: but inquiry may be expected to confirm the apprehension: is there any thing of conflict in our religion? Have we laboured to gain the mastery over ourselves? Have we struggled with our natural corruption? Are we conscious of any actual danger? And do we habitually seek the aid of God in fervent prayer? If nothing of this has yet been done, we may be assured, that we are journeying on the broad and easy way, that leadeth unto destruction: and be the inferences what they may, we cannot help pronouncing, with respect to the great majority of mankind, that such is really the fact: there cannot be any thing deserving the name, or possessing the efficacy of religion, into which a deep and sometimes a painful solicitude for our salvation does not enter: and yet how few are there comparatively, who view life in any other light, than as a period for the enjoyment of the world, so far as their means extend, or who ever think of prosecuting any other way, than that which points to their worldly interests, or which invites them by the gaiety of its prospects, and appeals to their love of ease.

But let it not be thought, that this state of things authorises any inferences unfavourable to the goodness of the Almighty.

It is, indeed, to be inferred from the Scripture, and even from what we may observe in the world, that human life, as life is very commonly used, will not ultimately turn out to have been a blessing: it is, in truth, an awful thing to live: charged as we are with the responsibilities attending this state of being, and so little disposed to fulfil them. But this is not the original constitution of things: life can have been no other than the gift of a merciful God, intent upon calling into being creatures capable of exalted happiness, and on enabling them to attain it, unless through their own perverseness and abuse of their natural freedom. Our Saviour, indeed, tells us, that "narrow is the gate;" but this is not to affirm, that any are excluded: on the contrary, all are commanded to "strive to enter in:" (Luke, xiii. 24.) and when it is added, that "many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able," it is intended only to warn us against deferring our repentance, till the door is closed against us in death. We are sure, on the explicit authority of Scripture, that God "would have all men to be saved," (1 Tim. ii. 4.), and that he is "long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," (2 Pet. iii. 9.) These declarations are sufficient to convince us, that the spiritual dangers, which are attendant on life, however real and extensive they are, must not be sought in the original constitution of our being: they can only be ascribed to a superinduced corruption: and thus they tend to illustrate, as do almost all the results of our inquiries into human nature, the scriptural doctrine of the fall, and the consequent need of a Redeemer: if that doctrine be once admitted, we instantly perceive that the goodness of God is not impeached in the blindness of men to their real interests, or in any consequences, which may thereupon ensue. All was good as it came from the hands of the Creator; and life was designed to be a blessing, and the source of blessings, although man so frequently converts it into a curse.

Still, however, we must look at our condition, as it actually is, whatever be the cause which has brought us into it: the way, on which the greater part of the species are journeying through life, is the broad one that leadeth to destruction: we know this fact upon the unerring authority of our Saviour. we cannot but acknowledge, that the statement is alarming,

especially as the presumption, which it furnishes, is strongly against ourselves: but alarm is in every case unavailing, if it does not lead us to consider by what means the danger may be avoided: our first and immediate care, no doubt, if we take the alarm, will be to look to our own safety; to review our lives, to examine our hearts, and to question ourselves as to the foundation of any hope we may entertain, that we ourselves are safe: and if, as will too frequently be the case, when the scrutiny is impartially conducted, our security turns out to be little else than indifference, and we are not really living in the faith and the fear of God, but travelling onward with the multitude, with scarcely a thought about our final destination, we shall surely trace back our steps, and hasten, however late in life, to find the narrow path. — But what will be our next concern? if we are not destitute of pity for our brethren and of zeal for the glory of God, we shall direct our attention to the state of those who are still pursuing the way we have left, or are likely to pursue it hereafter; and trusting that, by the grace of God, we are ourselves in the right path, we shall seek to snatch others from destruction, we shall invite and implore them to accompany us in the narrow way, which alone leadeth unto life.

It appears, then, that the awful truth contained in the text supplies a motive to the discharge of two, the most momentous of our Christian duties; we are to be solicitous for own salvation, and to inquire whither we are going: we are next to be careful for the salvation of others, and to guide them, if possible, in the right way. Considerations arising out of the former of these are, indeed, peculiarly well adapted to the present solemn season: but the latter seem to prefer even a stronger claim to your attention, when we advert to the especial object of this address.

A general concern for the salvation of all men, however unconnected with us, is the Christian frame of mind: it is, in fact, the highest and holiest charity, combined with a zeal for the honour of religion and the glory of God. It is hardly possible to imagine any man to be in earnest in his Christian profession, and at the same time indifferent, or even lukewarm, when he sees the multitude around him pressing forward to destruction: ignorant, perhaps, although living in a Christian land, of what is required for their salvation; or, more probably,

never laying the subject to heart; but resolving to live undisturbed while they may, and to abide their destiny, as they consider it, whatever it may be. In the discharge of the pastoral office, or even in the exercise of private friendship, or public charity, we must never despair of reclaiming the obdurate, even though they be far advanced in life; for nothing is impossible to the grace of God: but it were too much to admit, that the task is one in which experience holds out encouragement: inveterate habits become a species of nature: connexions long established are not easily dissolved: and the mind has acquired a rigidity, which renders it incapable of adapting itself to a new course of action and sentiment, and to those altered views of life and of eternity, which the gospel will imperiously require. It is, therefore, to be feared, that of the multitude, who have long been travelling on the "broad way," few can be persuaded to leave it: the duty, indeed, of *attempting* to persuade them remains in all its force; it is one of those instances, in which despondency is forbidden, even though we discern not much ground for hope.

But very different is the case of the young: of those, who as yet cannot be said to have commenced their journey, either in the broad or the narrow way, but have yet to choose: and though their choice of the path of life cannot positively be determined by any exercise of the wisdom or the charity of others, it may be influenced to such a degree, as to ensure almost a moral certainty, that they will decide aright: we cannot force them into the right way, but we can train them in such habits and sentiments, and cherish in them such dispositions, as will generally lead them to prefer it. Of the thousands, in fact, who are pursuing the way of destruction, whether in high or in humble life, we may generally pronounce, that they have not enjoyed the benefits of a truly Christian education: of the one class it will probably be found, that they were diligently instructed in what are called accomplishments, and of the other that they were utterly neglected in their youth: but of both alike, that no care was taken to imbue them with Christian knowledge and principles, or to rescue them from their natural corruption.

Education, then, is the instrument committed by Providence to the hands of the Christian, who moved by the alarming declaration in the text, that the majority of mankind

are pursuing the road to death, would interfere to save some: and if we can conceive a case, in which it is especially incumbent upon Christians to exert themselves in such a work of charity, it is surely in the country which we now inhabit. The situation of the children of the poor in England, with all the dangers which attend it, (and they are not few,) is a state of security compared with that of poor European children in India. At home, to say nothing of the stupendous improvements recently introduced by the *National Society*, there have for many years been schools in most of the populous districts, in which the elements of Christian knowledge might be acquired; and employments for those who were industriously disposed, might always be found in agriculture, in manufactures, or in trade: there, too, children bereft of their parents have probably other relatives, who, though unable to render them effectual aid, can still afford them some protection: and the system of parish relief, little as it is adapted to the present state of the country, so materially changed in its circumstances since that system was first established, is yet such as to provide that none shall actually perish. Besides all this, there is what may be denominated a *Christian influence*, which powerfully operates in a Christian land: the charity of individuals supplies, in some measure, any defect in the public Institutions. How many children of faithful servants have always been sent to school by the benevolence of their employers! and even they who have not been regularly trained in Christian principles, are yet within the reach of them: they cannot be thrown into a situation where the name of Christ is unknown; and the division of the whole country into parishes, in most of which there is a resident clergyman, and where the offices of religion are regularly administered, affords, if not a guarantee that all shall be trained in Christian knowledge, at least an opportunity of acquiring it, to all who from any cause shall be prompted to desire it.

But how stands the case with respect to India? It exhibits a gloomy contrast to the state of things, which has now been detailed to you, bad as we are accustomed to consider it at home. Schools adapted generally to the reception of poor Christian children, were, till lately, unknown in the distant provinces, and still are few: the employments open to the industry of those who are wholly without education, must, of

course, in a country where the agriculture, and manufactures, and much of the trade are in other hands, be very limited and precarious: a child, too, who is here bereft of his parents, has probably not a relative or friend in the country: and it often happens that of the two supports, which nature has given to helpless infancy, the one, which is frequently found in England to be the more efficient, is here nearly useless, or sometimes even worse than useless, in a Christian view: through the influence of native mothers, the daughters, at least, and sometimes the sons, of Europeans, have been lost to the faith of Christ. There are cases, too, in which the father is ordered to Europe, and must leave his children behind him: the camp, or the barrack, or the bazar is their only place of refuge: there have, indeed, been instances of the most generous and exemplary humanity exercised by persons, on whom the orphan has had no natural claims, and whose means of doing good have been exceedingly circumscribed. the ebullitions of truly Christian pity will burst forth, whenever the feeling is excited: but its operation must be partial and fortuitous, where public institutions are wanting, and charity is not organized into system. In this country, moreover, the objects of charity, of whom we are speaking, are exceedingly dispersed: their distresses, unless there be a motive to inquire for cases of distress, in the hope of relieving them, are not easily brought to light; the casualties and misfortunes, which befal the poor, are scarcely heard of: in a *Christian* neighbourhood nothing which deeply affects its meanest member is unknown, or altogether without interest: but the state of society is here very different: in its most favourable circumstances, from its fluctuating nature, we hardly attain to an interchange of sympathies between the different classes, and but rarely between persons of the same class. And as to a generally pervading *Christian influence*, it is not to be expected: Christianity is not here sufficiently advanced: it covers too small a space: it is not always well established in the minds of those who come hither from a Christian country: the probability is not very great, that it will afterwards gain an ascendancy over them: we have here, speaking with reference to the extent over which our countrymen are scattered, but few churches, few clergy, and few Christian institutions: and Christian associations, strongly as they are felt in some minds,

derive, for the most part, but little aid from local circumstances. Paganism is in possession of the millions, who constitute the people: and it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to suppose, that it has not influences of its own, from the operation of which even Europeans are not altogether exempt.

It was in such a state of things, and probably from the contemplation of circumstances such as those which have now been detailed, that your Education Society was first established, and commenced those labours of love, which appear thus far to have had the blessing of Almighty God: the institution has, indeed, been munificently supported by the Christian community throughout this presidency: and it appears, as its merits are more generally understood, to be continually gaining strength. It might seem, then, superfluous to dwell upon its excellencies: at the same time, I should hardly fulfil the object of this day's solemnity, if I contented myself with general commendation, and abstained from all notice of the specific benefits which, with the continued blessing of God, these schools may be expected to produce.

Chiefly, then, no doubt, and most obviously will benefit redound to the individuals who are the objects of your care. View them only in their present state, and in connexion with the prospects which are opening upon them, and then contrast with it what they probably *would* have been, if abandoned to their natural condition. The mind can hardly imagine any thing more wretched: poverty, and ignorance, and vice, and habits perhaps little removed from those of the lowest and most depraved of the natives, would, in the natural course of things, have been their portion: but what is the state in which you have actually placed them? It has nothing in it which, in the estimation of the proud and the luxurious, might redeem it from contempt: but, in a Christian view, it is all which the well-being and even the happiness of man can require: food and raiment suited to their condition; — Christian instruction, and that elevation of mind and character, which it almost invariably tends to inspire; — habits of attention and industry; — the practice of early piety; — and such of the elements of useful knowledge as may fit youth of both sexes respectively for subordinate, though useful, stations in life; — these are the benefits, which you confer upon all whom you take under your protection. — Without presumption we in-

dulge a hope, that the seed thus sown will, in very few instances, be thrown away: similar institutions, which have been sufficiently long established to furnish the result of experience, have been blessed with abundant fruits. All experience, indeed, tends to prove, that education is the most powerful, and at the same time the most manageable, engine of good, which has been committed to man. In the fulfilment of prophecy respecting the coming of Christ's kingdom, we may especially apply to the influence of Christian education that saying, that "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." (Isaiah xxxv. 1.)

But the benefits which such an institution confers, are not confined to the individuals for whom they are immediately intended: the state will be a gainer in every instance, in which your labours of love shall not have been wholly ineffectual. On this point, indeed, I am well aware, that the fears of some, and those too, good and enlightened men, will not allow them to concur with me without considerable reservation, at least in the circumstances of India: it is, however, in those circumstances especially that I would plead the cause of education. It is said, indeed, and truly said, that knowledge is power: but is it necessarily *hostile* power? and, further, may we not expect, even if we withhold knowledge, that power will still exist; and that, too, decidedly and inveterately hostile to those interests which we are most solicitous to maintain? To the former of these questions it may be answered, that the power conveyed by knowledge is not necessarily *hostile*: mere knowledge, indeed, unaccompanied with any principles which shall regulate or restrain it, is a tremendous implement of evil; and how to convey these principles is the problem which perplexes us with regard to the education, or, more properly, the instruction, of the natives; for education is a different thing: we can give them knowledge, but we are for the present precluded from giving them religion. But this difficulty applies but very partially to the present institution: in these schools religion and useful knowledge are blended together: the mischiefs attendant on mere knowledge are neutralized: they are more, I trust: knowledge in minds, which have been trained in Christian principles, constitutes a power which will generally be subservient to good. But even if we withhold knowledge, will not power

be created without our aid? and what will be its character? we know that at this moment the most noxious opinions, as they relate to religion, to morals, and to politics, the very opinions which threaten to subvert our constitution at home, are disseminated through every part of India: and on what class of persons are they calculated more immediately to operate? Not surely upon educated English gentlemen: nor, in the first instance, upon the natives: for they are hardly in a state at present to enter into such discussions, though they are advancing to it: but primarily and directly upon that very class of society, the children of which you are here training up in piety, and order, and submission to authority, and in grateful attachment to their benefactors: and many of whom, unless by such means we take care to have them with us, will, in any hour of trial, almost certainly be against us: to shut them out from *all* knowledge, if it were your policy, is not within your power: such policy, indeed, could hardly be reconciled to any liberal or humane feeling: but we have not the means of adopting it: the children of the class, to which I refer, will acquire a knowledge and a power of evil, if we train them not in a knowledge of good. Causes are in operation, over which we have no other control, and the question seems to be, whether, when our bark is launched into the ocean, and the tempest begins to blow, we shall endeavour to steer the vessel through all dangers, or let it drive? *You* are adopting the former course: you give knowledge, indeed, which is power: it is the force which impels the vessel, and without which it were stationary and useless; but you labour to conduct it to the haven where it should be, by placing religion at the helm.

But there is one other view, in which your labours may be regarded, and which should be briefly noticed. You do not probably consider yourselves as directly advancing the Christian cause among the idolaters around you: *directly*, indeed you are not; but indirectly, I conceive, and largely are you contributing to this desirable and blessed end; and in a way, too, to which the most cautious and timid cannot possibly object: you are reforming the lower order of Europeans: and it cannot be doubted, that the habits of Europeans of the lower class, as well as those of their superiors, have had a considerable effect in retarding the progress of the Gospel.

How, indeed, can we expect, that the heathen will forsake their idols, overpowered by the beauty of the Christian system, where they see it disfigured, and distorted, and rendered almost disgusting? With what consistency or common sense can we attempt to persuade them to believe in Christ, when professed believers are acting as if they were the most hardened of infidels? Or how shall we gain a hearing for the evidences of our faith, while we are strengthening, as much as we can, the prejudices against its truth? In the early ages, it was not by preaching alone, even after the cessation of the miraculous powers, that paganism was induced to take up the cross of Christ. It was by observing the surprising effects produced by the Gospel in the hearts and lives, not merely of eminent saints and preachers, but of the lowest among those, who had embraced it: the Christians had a distinguishing character: they believed in Christ, and they bore in their habits the impress of their faith: they were more honest, more temperate, more peaceable, than the pagans, with whom they were liable to be compared: men were not, indeed, thus to be immediately converted: but the tide of prejudice was turned, and they were ready to listen at least to the advocates of the Gospel, and to listen favourably: the inference was natural and just, that what was thus excellent in its effects might probably be true: we shall have cause to bless God, if the day arrive, when the same presumption shall operate in favour of the Gospel in India: we may then presume to hope, that "the redemption of this people draweth nigh."

But while I touch upon these collateral topics, let me not depress in your estimation the importance of that to which I first adverted, and which alone is your immediate concern; it is the saving of the souls of poor children for their own sakes, and for the sake of Christ. Their whole case is contained in the declaration of my text: *they are cast into a world, where wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction;* but under your parental guidance and love, they are directed to seek the narrow path; and by God's blessing they shall find it. But while you exult in these happy expectations, and thank the God of all mercies for having used you as his humble instruments, let me remind all who hear me, that delightful as is the spectacle now before us, a very different one may be witnessed in the world. What are these children, numerous as they

are, to the hundreds, who are still without? Before *them* the broad way and the wide gate are open still; and most of them will enter thereat, if there be none to divert them from their course. Labour, therefore, to increase the resources of this Christian establishment. Give of your abundance, if God hath blessed you; or withhold not of the little which he may have committed to your stewardship. Some trifling gratification, not essential to your happiness, and of which not a vestige would on the morrow perhaps remain, is the utmost sacrifice to be made in the amplest contribution. You are now called upon to make some sacrifice, whatever it may be, as an "offering for a sweet-smelling savour" unto Christ your Redeemer, who will graciously accept it, and place it among your "treasure in Heaven."

THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD MADE KNOWN BY THE CHURCH:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CALCUTTA,

On the 3d Day of December, 1820,

BEING THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

By THOMAS FANSHAW,

BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD MADE KNOWN BY THE CHURCH:

A SERMON, &c.

To the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. — Eph. iii. 10.

Although the passage recited is properly the subject of what I have now to offer, the two verses preceding it must be placed before you to render it sufficiently intelligible. What was it, which was done with the intent declared in the text? "Unto me," says the Apostle, "who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see, what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent, that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known" (or, more correctly, *made* known) "by the church the manifold wisdom of God." The event, therefore, brought about with the intent signified in the text, was the calling of the blessed apostle to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to proclaim the eternal purpose of God to abolish in due time all national distinctions, extending to all the kindreds of the earth a knowledge of Salvation through the same Redeemer.

In the declaration, then, of the end proposed in the grace thus given to St. Paul, and we may add, in the divine appointment of the Christian ministry, three topics offer themselves to our reflexion.

1. What is the manifold wisdom of God?
2. Why should it be proclaimed to the Gentiles? and,

3. What are the means, by which the work may and must be carried on, till all the kingdoms of this world are become "the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ?" (Rev. ii. 15.) A discussion, such as this, will easily connect itself with the solemn season of advent: while it will afford me the means of adverting to a kindred and local topic, to which, when viewed in the same relation, some interest will, I trust, attach.

1. In the first place, I am to speak to you of "the manifold wisdom of God:" the very phrase, however, seems to overwhelm us by the variety and weight of the topics, which it immediately suggests. Manifold, indeed, is that wisdom; infinite in its conceptions and modes of operation, even as apprehended by the faculties of man: and what then must it appear to sublimer and heavenly intelligences, although even they, as the text plainly intimates, are as yet but scholars and novices in the knowledge of the divine dispensations. Even man, however, with all his feebleness of faculty and corruption of heart and attachment to the things of the world, when he can calmly bring himself to reflect upon the themes of creation, and Providence, and grace, discerns enough to fill him with sentiments of the deepest adoration and awe.

In creation, the field which displays the divine wisdom, is absolutely immeasurable: into whatever district our curiosity or piety leads us, there we discover the wisdom of the Almighty, whether the object of research be a plant or an insect, or the system, by which worlds revolve; whether it be the instinct of animals, or the reason of man; whether it be the structure of the human frame, or those faculties and powers, which constitute the activity inherent in mind. And then what a countless multitude of subjects are either too great or too small to be grasped by our feeble vision! What regions lie beyond our reach, of which we but dimly descry the confines! There is no *boundary* to what we see: we discern not the *termination* of any thing: there is always something beyond, seen more and more indistinctly, till it is lost in distance: the whole circle of human knowledge in comparison with all the *subjects* of knowledge, with all which might be known by an *infinite* intelligence, and therefore *is* known to God, is probably but as a single leaf torn from the middle of some vast volume, filled indeed with references or allusions

to what has preceded, or with faint anticipations of what is to follow, and therefore but imperfectly understood, yet leading the mind to lofty speculations, and admiration of its Author: we understand just enough to be instigated to thought and inquiry, and to be convinced, from the little we comprehend, that wisdom must have dictated the whole. For how many benevolent ends do we discover in all the realms of nature, and in every work of God? What mighty effects are accomplished by means the most simple, and apparently the most inadequate? What provision is made to meet what in human mechanism we should consider as insuperable difficulties, but which, in the divine workmanship, serve only to evince the operation of one pervading mind? and what adjustment in a system inconceivably complicated, so that there is no collision or interference, where all at the first superficial glance would seem to be confusion? Our limits will not permit us to illustrate these general remarks by individual examples: but they will be verified by every inquiry into the works of the Creator.

But what shall we say of Providence? The evidence under this head would probably be more striking, than under that of creation, if we were equally capable of deducing it: which, however, seems not to be the case. In creation much may be inferred from the contemplation of the single parts, and those the most obvious and familiar to our apprehension. A blade of grass or an ear of corn, though, indeed, we detect not all its contrivances, is yet sufficiently complete for the purpose, and exhibits indubitable and connected proofs of profound design; but in the system of Providence proofs are not easily drawn from parts: we are required to contemplate and comprehend the whole. We cannot sever a link from the midst of a chain, but the chain is broken. In Providence we have to consider a long series of causes and effects, of purposes and results, which in that view of the subject, exist not but in connexion. The results, indeed, are apparent, but not so the process: we cannot always clearly connect the first cause with the final effect: the intermediate steps elude our investigation. Let it not, however, be thought that this difficulty at all invalidates the doctrine of Providence, as evincing the wisdom of God. It is as if we beheld some vast river discharging its waters into the ocean, but were not permitted to trace it upwards to its source: we catch, indeed, glimpses

of it at distant intervals; but mountains and forests frequently intervene. Still we are sure, that it has its source somewhere, however distant or inaccesible. And so it is with all the good we enjoy in the world, with all the provision made for our wants, with all our deliverances from danger; in short, with all that is incident to men or to nations: events are brought about, good is accomplished, and evil averted, not only through means quite inadequate to the end, as we estimate these things, but frequently in opposition to natural causes, of which we see the full force and efficacy, and are quite at a loss to understand how they have been defeated. And what is the inference? It is, that what is not of man is of God: it is, that an overruling power directs all things; influencing the wills of those, who serve him, to what is ultimately good; and in those, who by corruption are biassed to evil, averting the consequences, if not to themselves, at least to others, or even converting them to his purposes.

Here, however, we pass to what our text chiefly contemplates, the manifold wisdom of God in the dispensation of Grace and in the scheme of redemption. This wisdom, indeed, is not so easily discerned by minds, in which religion has made but little progress, as that which beams forth in the works of creation, or as that of which the proofs are more slowly deduced from God's moral government of the world. To be in any degree appreciated, it requires a preparation of the mind and heart; it requires us to divest ourselves of pride and prejudice, and to be deeply sensible of our condition. The mere philosopher is very capable of discerning facts, which establish the doctrine of final causes: or the metaphysician may be driven by the necessities of his argument to acknowledge a pervading and over-ruling mind: but to gain even a glimpse of what the apostle had called in the context, "the unsearchable riches of Christ," you must be in principle, in heart, and in sentiment already Christian: the first step in your progress must be humility; humility, however, not as prompted by unreasonable despair, but as founded in eternal truth. Look, then, at the natural condition of the species; of man without religion, meaning faith in a Saviour and Redeemer: what is his confidence, or even his hope? We are evidently in the situation of those, who have violated a law fortified by penal sanctions, without any power of satisfying

the penalty. Sceptics, in the pride of their hearts, may cavil at this comparison; but they have never adduced any evidence to shew, that it is not strictly applicable. If they will only admit the being of a perfectly just and holy God, all substantial consequences, which the Christian claims, will inevitably follow: it will follow, that the wisdom and mercy of God were in some way to be exerted for the restoration of violated order and the indemnity of man. — But even reason should revolt at the very groundwork of the deistical scheme, if scheme it can be called, which has no consistent application. In what a light does deism, if closely examined, place the deity? It leaves him in possession of perfect attributes, which are, however, but imperfectly exercised: it recognises his sovereignty, but would suspend his functions: it admits and even insists upon his mercy, but in a way which forbids us any longer to consider him as infinitely just, and which affords us no means of asserting his holiness. It represents him as the author of a law, the sanctions of which can never be abrogated, and the dignity of which can never be maintained. It acknowledges him to be the eternal source of purity and truth, although if the language may be endured, he acquiesces in falsehood and connives at iniquity. These results are inevitable, if Christ hath not "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. ix. 26.)

It is also allowable to ask of those, who profess to admit no test but reason, whether life is *rational* without religion? rational to the receiver, and rational in the giver? capable of being directed to such ends, as reason pronounces to be sufficient for a creature so endowed, or consistent with any adequate design of an all-wise creator? In relation to the former of these questions, what is this state of ours, uninformed by the views and hopes of the gospel, but a scene of vanity? in which the enterprises of the brave, and the levities of the trifling, the studies of the learned, and the schemes of the ambitious, are all reduced to the same level of insignificance? They are but different modes of pastime, not equally, indeed, respected in the world, but equally leading to nothing: and yet the mere pride of reason, one would imagine, if not the energies of immortal spirits, would teach men to look for something at least beyond the grave. — But still more shall we be at a loss to reconcile this gift of life with the attri-

butes of God, if it be not intended, as the gospel represents it, to be a period of discipline in the school of Christ. Why else have we in our fallen state, these powers of blessing and adoring the Almighty, of comprehending truths which have no relation to our present existence, of being warmed by piety, of delighting in holiness, and of aspiring to happiness far beyond what the world can give, if the only system, by which these feelings are cherished and matured, be not of God?

It may be right, however, to state more distinctly in what particulars especially our reason discerns the wisdom of God in the scheme of human redemption: and to judge of it adequately we should keep in view, that the end proposed was to repair the mischiefs occasioned by the fall. Now certainly we perceive, though our reason could never have suggested the expedient, that the assumption of our nature by the godhead (great as is the reverence with which we should discuss such subjects) does really meet the difficulty. It seems to present a method of atonement, which is at once sufficient to satisfy the offended majesty of heaven, or, more correctly speaking, to maintain the sanctions of the divine law, while the benefits of such atonement all redound upon offending man: it is at once, from its infinite dignity, adequate in the sight of God, while, being offered in our fallen nature, it extends its efficacy to every son of Adam. Christ died, indeed, but once: but for every individual expiation is made, through the operation of "the righteousness which is of faith." (Rom. ix. 30.) It seems, therefore, that even our reason should assent to that doctrine of our creed, "the taking of the manhood into God." In philosophy we readily admit as true, whatever serves to solve a difficulty not otherwise to be explained; and the discovery of such solutions is its highest triumph. Discovery is here out of the question: but shall reason presume to reject a doctrine, which reconciles, what else were at variance, the justice with the mercy of God; attributes which we are sure must co-exist, merely because it is revealed? Unless we are prepared to deny altogether the weakness and the pride of man, it must be conceded, that in this instance they render him irrational, if indeed his reason is, in questions of religion, to be submitted to the same test as in matters of science, or in the ordinary conduct of life.

But there lurks in some men a degree of prejudice against

what they denominate *speculative truths*, and a proportionate disposition to treat them as of little importance: such will not very readily discern in the scheme of our redemption any proofs of the wisdom of God. There cannot, however, be a more unjust or more dangerous distinction, than that which is thus attempted. All the speculative truths of religion, which are revealed in Scripture, (and no others deserve any serious regard) are, in their inferences and consequences and relations, highly practical: they are in truth the very basis of all practice; and none is more extensively so, than the doctrine of our redemption through Christ. What motives to holiness can our reason supply, which are not weak and unavailing, compared with the awful consideration of the sacrifice which infinite justice has required for sin, or with that adoration and love of God, which arise from the contemplation of his mercy? Or if discoveries were to be made, intended to affect mankind in their habits and views and sentiments, so as to operate upon the whole course of life and action, through what channel could they have been conveyed with the same effect, as when they are promulged by him, to whom all heavenly subjects were familiar, and who had glory with the Father, before the foundation of the world. (John, xvii. 5.) If holiness was to be taught by example, what character has the mind of man conceived, approaching to the purity and simplicity of Christ? If pride was to be abased, what condescension could the world exhibit, resembling that of the Son of God? If despondency was to be raised and comforted, to what asylum could it flee, comparable with an all-powerful Saviour? Or if authority were requisite, as assuredly it was, to give effect to the lessons of the teacher, where could it be found in the same degree, as in him, whose mission was confirmed by miracles, and whose future advent had been announced from the moment of man's first disobedience? Nor are these considerations to be treated, as merely authorizing an expectation of practical consequences, which are no where actually exemplified: the case is remarkably otherwise: we do find, through all the walks of human life, and in every region of the earth, that faith in a Divine Redeemer is the groundwork of the severest morality: and that no virtue, judged even as the world judges of virtue, from its benign effects on social happiness, can in point of

efficacy or extent be compared with the graces of the Christian. It may truly be affirmed, that the advent of Christ has in its consequences ennobled our nature; and where happily men are living under the influence of the Holy Spirit, has visibly restored it to the semblance of something divine: the ideal standard of human excellence, formed before our Saviour's appearance, falls very far short of what is attainable, and is really attained, in the school of Christ.

These reflections, capable however of being pursued through a thousand channels, may prepare us to form some imperfect estimate of the wisdom of God in the work of our redemption. Mysteries, it is true, envelope the doctrine theoretically considered: but in a practical view nothing can be more intelligible. Our nature, in its inconsistencies and contradictions, in its weaknesses and in its strength, in its elevation and depression, conspires with Scripture to bear witness to our primeval fall, and the wisdom of God has been exerted in a scheme for our restoration through Jesus Christ; a scheme, in which mercy is the moving principle, — in which holiness is vindicated, — in which justice is satisfied, — in which our weakness is upholden by divine support, — in which holy desires are instilled into the heart, — in which sorrow is comforted, — in which repentance is efficacious, — in which sin is pardoned, — in which God is reconciled, — in which the world is overcome, and in our last hour Death is deprived of his triumph. It is to such a scheme more especially, that the apostle refers, when he speaks of the "manifold wisdom of God:" and its complicated characters of power and wisdom we are able to a certain extent to appreciate, even with our faint perception of things divine. In no speculation merely human have such difficulties ever been *proposed* for solution; still less can it be said that they have been solved upon principles at once so coherent, and at the same time so sublime in their objects, so simple in their operation, and so effectual in their result. The greatness of the Deity and the misery of man had been the theme of sages from the earliest times: but who had ever suggested, as among things possible, a theory, by which, while God should be vindicated, man should be saved? Consider these points, as they deserve to be considered, and you will probably conclude, that the method of redemption, as revealed in the Bible, is one

among the various and independent proofs, that that book was inspired of God.

II. But it is time that I proceed to the second question suggested in the text, why should the manifold wisdom of God be proclaimed to the heathen? The inquiry is at any rate important to those, whom Providence has called to sojourn in a heathen land. You will not, however, expect that I should be able, within the narrow limits prescribed, to enter into all the considerations to which such a question might lead us; as the correction of morals, — the diffusion of arts and knowledge, — the abolition of cruel superstitions, — and the improvement of the general aspect of society under the humanizing influence of Christianity. I must confine myself to the topic employed by St. Paul, when he urges the preaching of the Gospel, in order that "the manifold wisdom of God" might thus be made known "to the principalities and powers in heavenly places." You can hardly require to be reminded, that this is an appellation of those superior intelligences, the different orders of Angels and Spirits, which surround the throne of God. It may seem, however, that this motive is too abstracted to be generally operative: it might even have been thought, that the holy Angels would not need to be instructed on such a subject, if the contrary were not expressly declared: but there are depths in the dispensation of grace, which, as St. Peter tells us, "even the Angels desire to look into:" (1 Pet. i. 12.) the whole extent of it is not seen at once even by celestial Spirits. But what an idea does this convey to us of the scheme of our redemption! With what awe should we contemplate it! How should we adore the wisdom, which conceived it from the beginning of the world! And how should we tremble, if we are conscious of neglecting so great salvation, or "of crucifying to ourselves the Son of God afresh!" (Heb. vi. 6.) The inference, however, is certain, that in the progress of divine truth and the triumphs of the Gospel, even the holy Angels themselves gain a clearer insight into the will and the purposes of the Almighty: still it may be thought that this consideration is not such as to operate generally, as an inducement to the diffusion of Christianity. They who feel this objection, it may be suspected, are not really impressed with that most efficient of all motives, a zeal for the glory of God. The

edification of the heavenly Spirits may not, indeed, immediately present itself to our minds: the idea is not sufficiently familiar to us: *our* intercourse is with God or with men: but the motive assigned, being taken thus high, comprises all lower degrees of it: that *men* may glorify God when they see our good works, is a consideration perfectly level to our views of duty: and this consideration is not weakened, but rather strengthened, when we recollect, that even the Angels themselves give glory unto God, when they behold the advancement of his purposes through the piety of their humbler fellow-servants.

Consider, then, what is the notion of a zeal for the glory of God. It is founded in a deep feeling and a practical recognition of the Divine perfections, and in a desire that all men should know them, as we ourselves do. We are convinced that the law of the Almighty is holy, and wise, and good: we are firmly persuaded, that happiness is to be found only in obedience to it: we are grateful for that portion of comfort and support, which we ourselves have derived even from a very imperfect compliance with the will of God: in love to our brethren and in pity to the ignorant, we wish that they could be persuaded to make an experiment of a religious life: we are sure, that to honour and to love God is the only true felicity; and we believe, that the more deeply the name and the greatness of the Almighty are revered, the more completely will men fulfil the ends of their being. But even though the world should be deaf to our arguments, or scorn our notions, we ourselves, under the influence of these convictions, shall take care to give no occasion to the enemies of religion to blaspheme: on the contrary we shall endeavour so to regulate our conduct, that even they who deride our scruples, as they will call them, or pity our weakness, shall reluctantly admit, that religion is the parent even of the virtues, which the world respects, although it refuses to lower its standard to the levity or laxity of the age.

A zeal, then, for the glory of God, if its lineaments have now been correctly portrayed, will be forcibly directed to the state of those nations, in which the Gospel is not merely undervalued, but utterly unknown. Where, for instance, shall its energies be excited, if they are dormant in the land, which we now inhabit? In what other region of the known

world is the glory of God more effectually obscured, and His truth, to allude to the Apostle's saying, more palpably "turned into a lie?" (Rom. i. 25.) The case of ruder nations furnishes no answer to this question. refinement, when corrupted, may be worse than barbarism; and system has a power of evil beyond simplicity. Where else too, we may ask, do we find more evident vestiges of that fall from primeval uprightness, which the Gospel was designed to repair? From the dislocated strata and confused position of heterogeneous substances in the bowels of the earth, the geologist attests the breaking up of the vast deep in times remote, if he yield not implicit faith to the Scriptures: and here, in like manner, does the Christian trace indubitable evidence of that wreck and ruin of the moral world, which the same Scriptures record: the best qualities or tendencies of our nature and their opposite defects are found in immediate contact: the fear without the knowledge of God; — courtesy without brotherly love; — profuseness without public spirit; — lowliness without humility; — a consciousness of sin without the want of a Saviour; — fortitude without feeling or resignation; — and a contempt of death without a thought of immortality; — these are among the inconsistencies and perversions of original goodness, which every day's observation may exhibit to our notice: and who can contemplate these appearances, and not lament them? or who, that laments them, can be backward to employ the remedy? I mean not, of course, in any way but that of affectionate and Christian solicitude, and by teaching and "persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." (Acts, xix. 8.)

There have been, however, and even yet perhaps they are not extinct, certain prejudices against all endeavours to disseminate Christianity in this country. With those which are purely political I have no other concern than to remark, that all policy is, to say the least of it, very questionable, when it is manifestly opposed to the purposes of Him, "who ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." (Dan. iv. 17.) No policy, in fact, in a case like the present, can be openly avowed, which does not profess to keep in view the real interests and permanent happiness of the governed: and thus the question will be

reduced to the very simple one, whether the temporal and eternal good, one or both of them, of the nations around us, would not be promoted by a gradual development to their minds and hearts, of the truths of the Gospel? I say, *gradual*, for he who should attempt or expect more than this, would in the attempt do mischief and in the expectation evince little knowledge of the actual state of things.

With respect to the question of temporal advantage, it is difficult to reply to objections, which assume no fixed or tangible form: we hear it, indeed, sometimes hinted, that these people are already in a condition, which perhaps may be deteriorated, but cannot easily be improved. If, however, the prevalence of liberal knowledge, habits of industry, mutual confidence in the transactions of life, a respect for the basis of all moral integrity, I mean truth, the absence of those social distinctions, which serve only to depress the great mass of the species, the elevation of the female part of society to their proper dignity and influence, and the possession of that liberty, wherewith Christ has made men free, (Gal. v. 1.) and which is really the principle, however overlooked, of all national greatness and prosperity in modern times,—if these several particulars enter largely into the theory of the well-being of any people, it were surely too much to abandon all established maxims and the dictates of our common feelings, in mere courtesy to supposed interests or secret predilections. For the want of such national blessings, as those which are here enumerated, no equivalent can be pleaded, and no compensation made.

But we cannot, as Christians, consent to rest the whole argument upon the prospect of *temporal* advantages. The Advent of Christ is no Advent to the people around us: we presume not indeed to say, that in their present unconverted state they derive no benefit whatever from the incarnation and death of a Saviour: it should rather appear from the Scriptures that the contrary is the truth, in a question of much difficulty and perplexity. We read that the Almighty "is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." (1 Tim. iv. 10.) The discussion of such a subject might alone occupy a volume: but it requires no discussion to establish, even admitting the salvability of the heathen, that great spiritual advantages do attend, and are confined to, an

actual belief in Christ: the passage last cited recognises the fact: why else do we read, that he who would have all men to be saved, would have them also "come to a knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 4.) Why else is Christ called the Way, as well as the Truth and the Life? (John xiv. 6.) Why else, in short, to pass over a multitude of passages bearing upon this subject, should our Saviour have commanded his Disciples to "preach the Gospel to every creature"? (Mark xvi. 15.) He says of himself that he "came into the world that He might bear witness to the truth:" (John xviii. 37.) but He is no witness of it to them, who know Him not, nor can they believe in His name. It is, in short, the general tenor of the New Testament, illustrated and confirmed in the lives and sufferings of the Saints and Martyrs, who went forth under the influence of the Holy Spirit, that great, if not fatal, disadvantage attends on those, who know not the "way of Salvation;" and it may be, though our limits will not permit us to go into the proofs of this opinion, that they are rarely seen to live in that "Spirit of Faith" (2 Cor. iv. 13.) which God possibly, for the sake of Christ, may be pleased to accept; and that the highest happiness to which they can attain hereafter is inconsiderable, compared with that which is reserved for the enlightened and humble believers in Christ. Any apparent inequality in such a course of proceeding may be vindicated by obvious analogies, and by a becoming attention to the principle, that all which we receive in things temporal or spiritual is freely of the Grace of God.

There is one other point connected with this head, which must not be entirely overlooked: it is the *universality* professedly intended and promised to the faith of Christ; and of course the duty, which thus is imposed upon all Christians, in their proper spheres of action, to promote and extend it. But this is not all; men may not perceive that this principle of universality is among the characters, which distinguish Christianity as a revelation of divine truth. It is possible, indeed, and in one instance it is exemplified, that the founder of a false religion may stimulate his followers to universal conquest under the pretence of exterminating infidelity, and doing honour to God. Such a spirit, however, is not easily confounded with the mild and beneficent genius of Christianity: its victories are all bloodless, and its trophies are

the prevalence of the love of God and man, and of a reasonable and acceptable worship, in regions where barbarism or superstition till then had reigned. We should recollect, however, that though an impostor might, in the mere spirit of carnality and ambition, seek the propagation of his tenets, an inherent impossibility in any mode of religion, that it should become universal, is a certain proof, where that religion is not a mere "shadow of things to come, while the body is of Christ," (Col. ii. 17.) that it cannot be from Heaven. If God is one, so also must be his final purpose respecting man: if the Saviour be but one, so also must be the method of salvation: if the Holy Spirit be but one, He can never have inspired or suggested all the jarring systems which divide mankind. And though this argument does not of itself enable us to decide which of them is the true one, it effectually invalidates the claims of those, which confessedly are partial and incapable of extension. In other words, the system of faith, which prevails in this country, even if it had any shadow of evidence in its behalf, would be completely disproved by its wanting the principle of dissemination and diffusion: and its defence is virtually abandoned, when its adherents are driven to profess, that the Almighty is delighted with variety in the systems of human belief, and that all, therefore, may be acceptable: as if truth and salvation and the will of God were but modes and fashions to be adapted to the convenience or caprice of the believer. Nor is the subterfuge more availing, when to avoid this difficulty the plea is urged, that the sacred books of all nations do really and in spirit teach the same thing: if it be urged in ignorance, it may excite our pity; but certainly it is not true, that any book, except the Bible, teaches that which is the object and the essence of the Bible, and to which all else is collateral, salvation through the Son of God. It is a triumphant consideration, therefore, in all such questions, that Christianity not only professes to be designed for universal acceptance, but moreover is fitted, without any accommodation or sacrifice of its purity, to be the religion of the civilised world: that it humanises where it does not find humanity; and that allowing for and retaining a difference of usages in things indifferent, it is adapted to combine in one scheme of faith and hope the whole family of man. As

St. Paul expresses it, " there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all." (Col. iii. 11.)

3. But lastly I am to remind you of the appointed means, by which the glory of God is to be advanced upon earth, and indeed, as we have seen, in Heaven. St. Paul says expressly that the manifold wisdom of God, should be made " known by the Church." This declaration surely conveys the idea of a high privilege, that of being the authorised channel of diffusing through the world a knowledge of the divine greatness in Creation and in Providence, but especially in Redemption to be extended to the whole of the human race: and it is in somewhat of a kindred spirit, that the church is elsewhere denominated the " pillar and ground of the Truth." (1 Tim. iii. 15.) Lofty as these expressions may appear, there is nothing in them figurative or hyperbolical: they correspond with the actual glories of the church, as they have been exhibited from its first foundation down to the present hour. What is the difference between the state of the world at present, and as it existed two thousand years ago? It is the difference which has been made by the preaching of the Gospel. If any doubt this assertion, let him turn his eyes to the condition of those regions, on which the Sun of Righteousness has not yet arisen. Some profess to expect all improvement from a natural expansion of the human powers: but is it not constantly affirmed and believed, that the state of this country is precisely such, as it was in the days of Alexander? unless, indeed, there be reason to suspect that it is somewhat deteriorated. On the other hand, do we not know, that the highest degrees of knowledge and holiness, of civil liberty and of social happiness, do actually exist, where at that period, a state of things prevailed, as bad perhaps in all respects as any which we now contemplate? To reclaim our ancestors from their idolatrous and cruel superstitions was apparently as difficult, and certainly as benign a task, as any which the church would now accomplish. And thus it is throughout the world: nations become enlightened and happy precisely in proportion to their Christian knowledge, and to the purity in which they have received and maintained the faith of Christ: or in the

words of my text, in proportion as the church has made known to them the manifold wisdom of God.

Consider, however, in what sense St. Paul in speaking of the church, may be supposed to apply the term; it can be only in the apostolical acceptation: we find that even in those early times the name was abused; there were divisions and heresies, all claiming to be of the church: but the dividers were to be marked, (Rom. xvi. 17.) and the heretics to be rejected. (Tit. iii. 10.) Not all, therefore, who bore the Christian name, were of the church: and the term could be meant only of those, who "continued steadfast," as it is said in the Acts (ii. 42.) "in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship." In short, the "one Catholic and Apostolic Church" of Christ, which in our creed we profess to believe, is the church which St. Paul means to designate as "the pillar and ground of the truth," and as the appointed channel for diffusing through the earth the blessings of light and the tidings of salvation.

To this church, then, of which there are many branches, "abiding in Christ, the true Vine," as we trust, and "bearing fruit," (John xv. 5.) it cannot be questioned by any, who hold to the Apostolic model, that the Church of England pre-eminently belongs: her government is primitive, being of the form which alone was recognised during the early ages: her doctrines are Scriptural, her liturgy, breathing, throughout, the purest spirit of the Gospel: and her worship is at once reasonable, decent, orderly, and edifying, removed alike from childish and superstitious pageantry, and from irreverence and rude familiarity towards the Creator: she has, indeed, been admitted even by those, whom local circumstances have fixed in other communions, to be the queen of protestant churches and the bulwark of the protestant cause. I would add, that no church can be better adapted to receive and to retain converts in the Eastern world, when once their minds shall have been brought to be satisfied with the simple decencies which are the proper garb of truth. Nor ought it to be overlooked, in a view of the question, which may hereafter be found important, that her principles are those of order and attachment to our national establishments. Strange indeed would be an indifference as to the political prepossessions of those, who undertake to be the teachers of the

people, especially in an empire so circumstanced as the British empire in India.

It cannot then be imagined, that in the work prescribed to the church of Christ, that branch of it to which we belong has no part, nor even a subordinate part to fill. It should seem, indeed, if her duties are to be measured by her means and opportunities, that no church since the days of the Apostles has been called to such high destinies. To what fortuitous coincidence shall we impute it, that at this moment her clergy are exercising their ministry in every quarter of the globe? In America flourishing churches have grown up entirely under her patronage. (A) In Africa a colony has been planted, by which her doctrines and discipline are brought into contact with the superstitions of ignorant and barbarous tribes. In New South Wales she has a field before her nearly equal in extent to the whole of Europe. And what shall we say of Asia? A vast empire has been given us, or rather imposed upon us; and wherefore? He who can reconcile such a consummation even to philosophical views of the ways of God, without reference to the purposes of His manifold wisdom as revealed in Scripture, and can believe it to have been brought about merely for the gratification of our avarice or vanity, cannot have advanced very far in the knowledge which sound philosophy might teach him: it is not merely unchristian, it is unphilosophical, it is unreasonable to believe that God ever works in vain, or even brings about mighty revolutions with a view to results comparatively mean and trivial.

I cannot conclude, however, without briefly adverting to a topic closely connected with our present discussion, and not unfitly introduced at the present season. Out of the zeal of our church and nation, appealed to by royal authority, and at the instance of an ancient and chartered society (B), to make known the manifold wisdom of God, an institution (C) is likely to arise in this vicinity, calculated, as we trust, under Providence, to advance the glory of God and the highest interests of man. It is designed to be strictly collegiate (D) in constitution, in discipline, and in character: its objects will be the education of Christian youth in sacred knowledge, in sound learning, in the principal languages used in this country, and in habits of piety and devotion to their calling, that they may

be qualified to preach among the heathen: the attention of the learned persons connected with it will be directed to making accurate versions of the Scriptures (E), of the liturgy, and of other holy books: it will endeavour to disseminate useful knowledge by means of schools, under teachers well educated for the purpose; and it will aim at combining and consolidating, so far as may be, into one system, and directing into the same course of sentiment and action, the endeavours which are here made to advance the Christian cause, The favour and patronage of the public in England have been eminently displayed towards the projected institution: the king's letter, granted to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, has been productive beyond all example; and other religious societies and public bodies have munificently aided the work. (F) It will be evident, however, when the objects (G) are considered, that more abundant means will still be requisite to give to such a plan all the effect of which it is naturally capable; nothing perhaps equally comprehensive has yet been attempted by any protestant church; yet I doubt not that the members of our own, wherever dispersed, will be ready to afford it their assistance, and more especially in India. With a degree of impatience, for which the motive is an ample excuse, some have wished that the established church would show herself more prominently in the great work of diffusing the light of the Gospel through the Eastern world. This duty, though not hitherto so fully discharged as may have been desired, has never been forgotten. (H) In the present endeavour she avails herself of means and opportunities, which until now had been withholden. For their efficacy we trust in the Almighty: at the same time beseeching him to put it into the hearts of all, to whom the appeal (I) shall be made, to further and support an institution having no object but his glory, in making known by the church his manifold wisdom to those who "have the understanding darkened, and are alienated from the life of God." (Eph. vi. 18.)

NOTES.

Note (A) *p.* 125.

Nova Scotia and Quebec are dioceses, forming branches of the established church of England; both of them, but the former especially, are deeply indebted to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. In Nova Scotia the clergy are appointed and maintained by the Society; to whom also whatever is found of episcopacy within the United States may in great measure be attributed. The bishops there preside over churches formed out of the wreck and remnants of congregations, which had been established by the society, and which their missionaries were obliged to abandon in the public commotions, which terminated in the separation of the greater part of the colonies from the British crown. These churches appear to be increasing in numbers and importance, although they have not, more than any other religious community, support from the state. It cannot, indeed, be matter of surprise, that reflecting Christians should, in a country where religion is abandoned to anarchy, fanaticism, or neglect, flee to an asylum, where primitive order and sober piety prevail.

Note (B) *p.* 125

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was incorporated by royal charter in the thirteenth year of the reign of His Majesty William III., A.D. 1701. some further particulars will be found in the *Appendix*. On the petition of the society that His present Majesty (then Prince Regent) would graciously be pleased to enable them to extend their operations to the continent and islands of Asia, a royal letter was granted, dated the 10th February 1819, directed to the archbishops of the two provinces, and authorising a collection to be made in the churches throughout the kingdom, in furtherance of this charitable design.

Note (C) *p.* 125.

The foundation stone of the college of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, was laid on Friday, the 15th December 1820, on a piece of ground on the bank of the river, about three miles below Calcutta, and adjoining to the Honourable Company's botanic garden, granted to the society, in the name of the Honourable Company, by the most noble the Marquess of Hastings, governor general in council. The following were the prayers used, and the proceedings which took place on the occasion:—

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we thy humble servants, before we enter upon the work, which we are now assembled to take in hand, implore thy grace and blessing. We know that the designs of man avail not to thy glory, unless they are accepted for the sake of thy Son, and are aided by thy Holy Spirit. The offerings of the rich and the counsels of the prudent are alike unprofitable, if Thou, in whose hands are

the issues of all things, withholdest the brightness of thy presence. Vouchsafe then, O Lord, to look down from heaven, in the abundance of thy mercy, on our hearty desires to advance the kingdom of thy Son. Behold us here surrounded by millions of our fellow-men, who know not the name of Him, by whom alone they can be saved, having their understandings darkened, and being sunk into sin and sensuality. Moved with compassion at this their state, and desiring to impart to them the blessed knowledge and saving faith, which Thou hast mercifully revealed to ourselves, we ask thy favour to an institution, adapted, as we believe, under thy gracious providence, to the diffusion of truth and of consolation in a Saviour. In thy goodness, then, prosper this our undertaking, that so it may redound to thy glory and to the salvation of souls. Vouchsafe to all, who shall belong to this seminary, thy especial guidance and blessing. Let those who shall govern it be ever mindful of the solemn trust committed to them, and labour to maintain within its walls sound discipline, and Christian holiness. Let those, who shall be instructors, especially direct the minds of youth to the objects of their sacred calling. Let the students grow up in grace, and become daily more and more disposed to renounce all secular allurements in the hope of being accepted instruments in advancing the kingdom of thy Son. Let its learned men be mighty in the Scriptures, and so skilled in languages, that they may faithfully and intelligibly propound thy Holy Word. Let its missionaries go forth in meekness, in patience, and in love unfeigned, as faithful apostles of Jesus Christ: and may all, who shall in any way be admitted to its benefits, be actuated by unity of spirit, and speak the same thing: let no schisms, or heresies, or divisions, defeat the end of their calling, or give occasion to the enemies of Christ to blaspheme: but let primitive truth and apostolical order and unwearied labours of love be evidences, that Thou art with them, and that thy Spirit has deigned to rest upon the spot, from which they were sent. O Lord, we pray thee, accept this place unto thyself: let it be a school of pastors and teachers, for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ; increasing more and more, until this land of darkness be illumined in all its recesses with the light of the everlasting Gospel, and the Gentiles, sitting down together in the kingdom of their common Redeemer, shall glorify God for his mercy. Hear us, we beseech Thee, for the sake of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

O Lord, who alone puttest it into the hearts of sinful men to seek thy glory, we thank Thee that Thou hast been pleased to stir up in our church and nation that zeal for the honour of thy name, of which this institution will be, as we trust, among the blessed fruits. Our fathers saw not in *their* day these manifestations of thy kingdom. More especially we bless Thee for all the labours of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and particularly for the extension of their charitable designs to this quarter of the globe. We thank Thee that it hath pleased our most gracious sovereign to authorize the collection of the alms of the pious throughout our native country, in aid of a desire to diffuse the light of the Gospel through those parts of the continent and islands of Asia, which are subject to British authority. We acknowledge it to have been of thy goodness, that other religious societies and public bodies have munificently contributed to the furtherance of this Christian

enterprise. We recount with gratitude, that the supreme government of British India has, on behalf of the Honourable East India Company, and for the purposes of this institution, granted and assigned this spot, well adapted to the cultivation of sacred studies and to holy retirement. And we forget not to praise Thee for every manifestation of good will to this design, whether it be from the rich and powerful, or from those who can only pray for its prosperity. Suffer not, O Lord, this zeal to abate, if, as we trust, it be of Thee, and has been kindled by thy Holy Spirit: that when we, who behold the beginning of this work, shall be gathered to our fathers, they, who shall come after us, may gladly support and extend it. Raise up to this house, we humbly beseech Thee, a never-failing succession of benefactors, who shall be animated with the spirit and views of its founders; and whose names may be perpetuated through all generations as of blessed memory, and their good deeds be accepted at the throne of grace through the sole merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

O Lord Almighty, who hast promised to be evermore with thy church, militant here on earth, we commend to thy especial guidance and protection that apostolical branch of it of which we are members, and which is now established in this country. And herein we pray for our most gracious sovereign lord King George, and the whole of the royal family; for the ministers and dispensers of thy word and sacraments, wherever dispersed, and for all congregations committed to their charge. More particularly, as we are in duty bound, we ask thy blessing on the Honourable the East India Company, and on the government of this great empire; on the Most Noble the Marquis of Hastings, the members of the Supreme Council, and on all who act in authority under them; on the judges of the Supreme Court; on the magistracy, and on all ranks and orders of the people; grant that in their respective stations they may be influenced by an unceasing regard for the improvement and happiness of the less favoured children of the same Creator; and so dispose their hearts, that the renown and dominion in these eastern regions, to which thou hast wonderfully exalted our nation, may be found to have been among the counsels of thy providence for the diffusion of thy saving and eternal truth. And suffer not, O Lord, this end to be retarded by any habitual violations of thy gospel, among those who profess and call themselves Christians; but teach us all to feel, that we are required to be examples to the unbelievers in purity, in piety, and in charity. Furthermore, we ask, that thy choicest graces may be vouchsafed to those who are called and sent to bear the tidings of salvation to the Gentiles. Endue them, O Lord, with that power of thy word, with that holiness of life, and singleness of heart, and freedom from the distraction of secular and party views, which are the endowments of the true missionary, and which alone can call down thy blessing on his endeavours. Increase the number of those, who in this spirit are ready to devote themselves as apostles of thy blessed Son; and may the house which we now build, be the fruitful parent of those, who having converted many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars for ever. Lastly, we commend to thy Holy Spirit ourselves, who are here assembled: in this, and in every work of charity, may we find our hearts more deeply and surely engaged in thy service, and more indifferent to the perishable concerns of the world!

Let every day bring us nearer unto Thee: let a more fervent love of Thee, a more profound adoration of thy greatness, and a warmer zeal for thy glory be the encouragement and reward of our imperfect endeavours to exalt thy name: nor let us forget that, a little while, and all which shall remain of our earthly career, shall be the fruits of our faith in Christ, and those works which follow us. These prayers we offer unto Thee through the sole mediation and merits of Jesus Christ, in whose blessed name and words we sum up our petitions: —

Our Father, &c.

Then the following inscription was read from a brass plate: —

INDIVIDUÆ. ET. BENEDICTÆ. TRINITATI. GLORIA
COLLEGII. MISSIONARII.
SOCIETATIS. DE. PROPAGANDO. APUD. EXTEROS.
EVANGELIO.
EPISCOPALIS. AUTEM. NUNCUPANDI.
PRIMUM. LAPIDEM. POSUIT.
THOMAS. FANSHAW. EPISCOPUS. CALCUTTENSIS.
PRECIBUS. ADJUVANTE. ARCHIDIACONO. CÆTERO-
QUE. CLERO.
RESPONDENTE. ET. FAVENTE. CORONA.
DIE. XV. DECEMBRIS.
ANNO. SALUTIS. MDCCCXX.
BRITANNIARUM. REGIS. GEORGII. IV. PRIMO.
PRINCEPS. ILLE. AUGUSTISSIMUS.
QUUM. REGENTIS. MUNERE. FUNGERETUR.
LITERAS. SOCIETATI BENIGNE. CONCESSIT.
QUIBUS. PIORVM. ELEEMOSYNAS.
PER. ANGLIAM. UNIVERSAM. PETERE. LICERET.
HOS. IN. USUS. EROGANDAS.
IN. EOSDEM. VIR. NOBILISSIMUS.
FRANCISCUS. MARCHIO. DE. HASTINGS.
REBUS. INDICIS. FELICITER. PRÆPOSITUS.
AGRI. SEXAGINTA. BIGAS. BENGALENSES.
AD. RIPAM. GANGETIS. PROPE. CALCUTTAM.
NOMINE. CŒTUS. HONORABILIS. MERCATORUM
ANGLICORUM.
CHARTULIS. ASSIGNAVIT.
SOCIETAS. VERO. DE. PROMOVENDA. DOCTRINA.
CHRISTIANA.
PARTICEPS. CONSILII. FACTA.
GRANDEM. EST. LARGITA. PECUNIAM.
ILLA. ITIDEM. MISSIONARIA.
CUI. NOMEN. AB ECCLESIA. DUCTUM.
NE. TALI. TANTOQUE. DEESSET. INCEPTO.
PAR. MUNUS. ULTRO. DETULIT.
CHRISTI. NON. SINE. NUMINE.
LÆTA. HÆC. FUISSE. PRIMORDIA.
CREDANT. AGNOSCANT. POSTERI.
AMEN.

Then the plate was deposited, and the stone was laid, and the bishop pronouncing: —

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God blessed for ever, I lay this the foundation stone of the Episcopal

Mission College of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, to be commonly called and known as "Bishop's College, near Calcutta."

O Father Almighty, through whose aid we have now commenced this work of charity, we bless Thee that we have lived to this day; O prosper the work to its conclusion; and grant that so many of us as thy providence shall preserve to witness its solemn dedication, may join together in heart and in spirit in praising thy name, and in adoring thy mercy, and in supplicating thy favour to this house evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The peace of God, &c. &c.

Note (D), *p.* 125.

The intention is to make the discipline and studies established in our English universities, with so much benefit to the cause of true religion and sound learning, the basis of the constitution of the College near Calcutta; and to raise upon them such a superstructure, as the circumstances of this country and the particular destination of the students may require. The site of the college ensures seclusion and freedom from interruption: the students will be constantly within their own walls or grounds, except by special permission, and be subject to a system of order and restraint; and the chapel, the hall, and the lecture rooms will claim their regular attendance at specified hours. In their studies, theology, with all that is subsidiary to it, will form the prominent employment of those who are designed for the ministry; combining with the study of the Holy Scriptures, Hebrew and the learned languages, ecclesiastical and profane history, the elements of natural philosophy, and so much of mathematical knowledge as may tend to invigorate their minds and facilitate all other acquirements. They who shall be destined to be school-masters, will have their studies in like manner directed to their future efficiency: they will be well grounded in classical learning, and be furnished with all those branches of knowledge which may conduce to open the minds and dissipate the prejudices of the native population of India. By both classes of students, however, the Oriental languages, those especially used in the districts, which may be expected to become the scene of their future labours, will be cultivated with the greatest application; and all will be familiarised with the principles which attach British subjects to their national establishments, and be trained in feelings of respect and deference for the constituted authorities in India: and it is hoped, that with the divine blessing, early habits of piety and industry, and self-control, combined with an affectionate remembrance of the place of their education, will give to the students a character of mind and sentiment which they will never lose, and by which they shall be marked and known in all future life.

Note (E), p. 126.

Some of the latest periodical publications announce, that the offer of a considerable sum of money has been voted to the college in this specific department of its proposed operations, but no official intelligence to that effect has yet been received.

Note (F), *p.* 126.

The royal letter is understood to have produced about 47,000*l.*, or nearly 48,000*l.*: on any former occasion the sum raised never actually reached 20,000*l.* The late collection includes a grant of 500*l.* from the university of Oxford, and several liberal contributions from other public bodies and from opulent individuals. Of the proceeds the society anticipated 5,000*l.* by a vote to that amount, to the bishop of Calcutta, to enable him, in any way which he might deem advisable, to extend the operations of the society to the East, and this sum has been applied to the erection of the college. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge having been invited to co-operate with the sister society, also placed the sum of 5,000*l.* at the bishop's disposal, to be applied to the purposes of the college; and the Church Missionary Society immediately voted to the bishop an equal sum in furtherance of the same object.

Note (G), *p.* 126.

The objects of the college, as originally projected, were enumerated in a letter addressed by the bishop of Calcutta to the secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts: of that letter a very large impression was distributed in England, and it found its way into most of the periodical publications which notice religious proceedings. It may be right, notwithstanding, to state briefly that the college is founded for a principal and two other professors, and for as many students as the funds of the society shall enable them to maintain in college, and whom they can afterwards provide for as missionaries, schoolmasters, or catechists at the stations to which they may be appointed; such stations to be under episcopal jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastical or spiritual, and subject in other points to the visitation of the visitor of the college. As the object of the institution is definite, no students can be admitted who are intended for secular situations in life; and some assurance will probably be required at admission, that the candidates are sent thither with no other view than to qualify themselves for duties contemplated in the institution, on condition of being maintained in the college for a certain period, and provided for afterwards from the college funds, or, perhaps, from other funds destined to the same objects, and equally well secured; and some probation may be requisite to ascertain the disposition and abilities of the candidates, who might otherwise be wholly unfit to advance the objects of the institution, while its resources would thus be diverted from their proper and productive use. The statutes, however, will define more precisely several points which cannot so well be taken into consideration, until some probable notion may be formed of the actual revenues of the college, or of its reasonable expectations.

It has been already stated, that abundant means will be required to carry this plan into full effect. By much the greater part of the three several sums of 5,000*l.* each will be necessarily expended in completing the college, including the offices and printing-house; and, probably, but little will remain when the printing-house shall have been supplied with presses and types, and furniture shall have been purchased for the hall, the library, the dormitories, and the lecture rooms, and the books most wanted shall

have been bought for the college library, Of the sum collected under the royal letter, if the whole shall be funded as a permanent endowment, the interest will not be more than sufficient to defray the salaries of the eminent and learned men who may be appointed to the college professorships. Provision is still to be made by the society for the maintenance of students in the college, and for their support after they shall have left it.

With regard to the comprehensiveness of the design of the institution, the views of the society may be ascertained from the royal letter, wherein they are stated to be desirous to extend the range of their labours to "such parts of the continent and islands of Asia as are under the royal protection and authority." Persons, therefore, who may be required as instruments for diffusing truth and knowledge in any of the languages principally used through those wide regions, in Hindoostanee or Bengalee, in Tamul or Teloogoo, in Mahratta or Guzerattee, in Singhalese or in Malay, may be severally prepared and qualified for the undertaking, so soon as students from the several districts, in which those languages respectively prevail, can be maintained by the society, and missionary stations shall find the means of support in the several countries from which such students came. There is, in fact, no district within the limits of the British possessions in the East, to which the benefits of the college may not eventually be extended. Moonshees, skilled in those languages respectively, must of course be retained; who will be further wanted in the department of translations to be used at the stations, at which such students shall be employed on their return to their native country. Every station will be served by an English missionary (a clergyman), assisted by persons (either natives, or of European parentage,) who have been educated in the college.

Note (H), *p.* 126.

The success which has attended the labours of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge in the south of India, where several thousands of Christians, the converts, or the descendants of the converts, of their missionaries, are now living in a manner which carries back the mind to the early ages of the Gospel, sufficiently attests, that the church of England has not been altogether regardless of the Heathen; and at the same time it proves, that the difficulties which lie in the way of conversion are not absolutely insuperable.

Note (I), *p.* 126.

The appeal is now made in the diocese of Calcutta, by the partial distribution of the preceding sermon and of the statements annexed to it, in the hope that they who are zealous for the diffusion of truth and knowledge, through the eastern world, such especially as are solicitous that the established church should maintain its just rank in this great undertaking, will find enough in the present attempt, to merit their encouragement and patronage. It may be proper, however, in reference to an institution, of a character in some respects so new in India, to point out in what way, they who may be generally disposed to promote it, may appropriate their benefactions; at the same time suggesting in

what departments of the college expenditure, their aid will, for the present, be most urgently required. The whole may be classed under the heads of

1. Missionary Stations.
2. Scholarships in College.
3. The College Library.
4. The College Press.
5. Christian Schools.
6. Native Schools.
7. The Fabric Fund.
8. General Purposes.

1. The society for founding the college, contemplates the establishment of missionary stations, wherever an opening shall seem to present itself for accomplishing their benevolent purposes. To supply such stations with missionaries and their proper assistants, and to keep up a never-failing succession of them is their primary object; to which every thing else is collateral and subsidiary. But before this can be effected, it is obvious that students must be maintained in the college and duly prepared for their allotted labours. It may seem, therefore, that the question of supplying stations is posterior to that of maintaining students, and may thus be for the present postponed; it must be considered, however, that the admission of students into the college must in great measure be regulated by the prospect of a provision for them afterwards; and such provision will be generally (although not invariably in respect of schoolmasters,) by their appointment to some missionary station. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance, that the public benevolence as applicable to this head, should shew itself early, and in truth it is the point, to which above all others, the society may be presumed to wish, that attention should be directed: benefactions, therefore, made specially applicable to this department will be suffered to accumulate, until such stations can be actually formed.

2. The foundation of scholarships is only second in importance to the preceding head, and even prior to it in actual operation. A scholarship, it is computed, taking the average on the difference of expence in maintaining European students, (or those of European habits,) and natives, and reckoning on a moderate rate of interest, may be founded and endowed for 5000 sicca rupees. On the interest of this sum one student at a time may be constantly educated in the college, free of every charge: and every scholarship so endowed will, as in our English universities, be for ever denominated from the name of the founder, who moreover will have the privilege of recommending the first scholar, being a youth duly qualified according to the statutes, and to be subject in all respects to their operation. Other sums, however small, being directed to be appropriated to this object, will be applied to the maintenance of a student, when the aggregate shall be found sufficient.

3. The college library is calculated to receive nearly 5000 volumes. It will be desirable to store it with the most approved works in theology, especially of the great divines of the church of England; in biblical criticism; in ecclesiastical and general history; in Oriental literature, including dictionaries and grammars; with classical authors, and with a

few books of science; the purchase of all which will obviously be attended with considerable expence.

4. The college press will, it is hoped, embrace an important and efficient department of the college labours. For the expence of printing versions of the Holy Scriptures, if a statement already alluded to may be credited, provision for some time will probably have been made; but for printing versions of the liturgy, of short religious treatises and tracts, such as those of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, of elementary books of science, and of school books, a considerable fund will in time be required; and from the very commencement of the college labours, something may be attempted in this way.

5 & 6. Both Christian and native schools are within the contemplation of the society. One of the former kind will be indispensable to every missionary station, and such might be established to great advantage in some instances, where no missionary station could conveniently be formed. In native schools the elements of useful knowledge and the English language will be taught, wherever it may seem desirable, without any immediate reference to Christianity. In either case, it will be among the objects of the college to supply masters well qualified for the undertaking. The provision for such while they remain in college, will fall under the second head of expenditure; and for those who should be attached to stations, under the first head: all other schools would form a distinct concern.

7. Great inconvenience has been sometimes sustained by collegiate and similar institutions, where no provision had been made to preserve the fabric, or to restore it when fallen into inevitable decay. The college buildings, it is expected, will be of as durable construction, as any which have lately been erected in this country; but the expediency is manifest, especially considering the ravages made by the climate, of having a small fund in reserve, the accumulations of which would remove all apprehension.

8. Under the head of benefactions to general purposes, must evidently be understood sums applicable, according to the intention of the donor, not only to any of the objects already specified, such as in the judgment of the society and the college authorities may be deemed most conducive to carrying on the designs of the institution, but generally to any expences which may arise, and are unavoidable in such an establishment, as to the payment of the salaries of moonshees, pundits, and servants: every thing, in fact, which is implied in an appeal to the public liberality, is comprised under this head; and the minute enumeration of the proposed branches of expenditure is intended, partly to exhibit more fully the objects of the institution, and partly, where there may be a strong feeling of preference towards any one of them, to allow it the means of shewing itself, and thus of stimulating others in the same course of benevolence. At the same time, it is suggested, that although all the objects enumerated will be essential to the institution in that state of activity and extensive usefulness, which through the blessing of providence its founders hope it may attain, yet some of them are identified with the very commencement of its labours, and on the accomplishment of these its further exertions must depend. It remains only to be noticed, that benefactions in support of

the college will be received by the venerable the archdeacons within their respective archdeaconries, or may be transmitted through any other channel to the bank of Bengal, or other the treasurer for the time being, to be placed to the account of the *Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, in aid of the funds of their missionary establishment, called Bishop's College, near Calcutta, under the head of . All such benefactions shall be thankfully acknowledged and recorded in the *Annual Abstract of the Society's Proceedings*, published in London, of which copies will be distributed in India: and of all benefactions and legacies of more than ordinary amount, the remembrance will be perpetuated in the Commemoration of the Founders and Benefactors to be solemnised annually in the college chapel.

The college is already indebted to the benevolence of several individuals, who have afforded it, in various ways, valuable and gratuitous professional services, which, however, may be better alluded to, than distinctly specified, in this place.

The benefactions are at present, from

The Bishop of Calcutta, towards the fitting up and embellishment of the college chapel, Sa. Rs. - - - - - - 4000

C. T. Metcalfe, Esq., the resident at Hyderabad, a piece of land, on the river bank, by which the estate is greatly improved, measuring one biggah and three cottahs - - - - - -

Major General St. George Ashe, for general purposes - - 500

APPENDIX.

As but little, comparatively, can be known in India of a society which is now only beginning to extend its exertions to this quarter of the globe, it may be useful to reprint from a very interesting and instructive work, called PROPAGANDA *, a table, serving to show the range and magnitude of its operations in those fields of labour, in which it has been so long, and still continues to be occupied, together with the author's *Remarks* upon the same.

* Attributed to the Reverend Josiah Pratt.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE, FROM 1718 to 1818,

OF THE

STATIONS, NUMBER, AND STIPENDS OF THE MISSIONARIES AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

Year N. S.	New England.	New York.	New Jersey.	Pennsylvania.	North Carolina.	South Carolina.	Georgia.	Bahama.	Newfoundland.	Nova Scotia.	Guinea.	Florida.	Canada.	New Brunswick.	Cape Breton.	Sierra Leone.	New South Wales.	Norfolk Island.	Total Missionaries, &c.	Salary. £.	s.
1718	4	14	5	3	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	31	1526	0
1719	3	13	5	3	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	29	1396	0
1720	3	10	3	4	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27	1261	0
1721	4	11	3	4	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30	1346	0
1722	7	12	4	5	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34	1596	0
1723	7	10	5	4	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34	1680	0
1724	9	11	5	4	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	37	1790	0
1725	9	11	4	4	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	36	1720	0
1726	9	11	4	3	1	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	36	1720	0
1727	10	12	5	5	1	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	42	1985	0
1728	11	13	5	4	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	43	1989	0
1729	12	13	5	5	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	44	2070	0
1730	12	15	5	5	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	46	2165	0
1731	14	16	5	4	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	47	2185	0
1732	13	17	5	5	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	48	2295	0
1733	15	16	4	6	1	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	51	2415	0
1734	17	19	6	8	1	10	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	63	2965	0
1735	19	18	6	8	1	10	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	64	3015	0
1736	18	17	6	8	1	9	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	62	3015	0
1737	20	17	6	8	1	10	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	65	3050	0
1738	20	17	6	8	1	9	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	64	3020	0
1739	19	17	5	8	2	10	—	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	65	3090	0

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Year. N. S.	New York.	New England.	New Jersey.	Pennsylvania.	North Carolina.	South Carolina.	Georgia.	Bahama.	Newfoundland.	Nova Scotia.	Guinea.	Florida.	Canada.	New Brunswick.	Cape Breton.	Sierra Leone.	New South Wales.	Norfolk Island.	Total Africa, America, &c.	Salary. £. s.
1771	22	37	12	10	14	1	3	4	4	13	1	2							123	4790 0
1772	22	37	12	11	9	1	3	4	4	13	1	2							119	4660 0
1773	23	36	12	11	4	1	2	3	4	13	1	2							112	4495 0
1774	23	35	12	11	5	1	2	3	4	13	1	2							114	4530 0
1775	23	37	12	12	5	1	2	3	4	13	1	2							115	4465 0
1776	23	36	12	12	4	1	2	3	4	13	1	2							113	4365 0
1777	23	36	12	12	4	1	2	3	4	13	1	2							113	4365 0
1778	23	36	12	12	2	1	2	3	4	13	1	2							111	4260 0
1779	13	29	8	8	1	1	1	2	3	12	1	1							80	3157 10
1780	13	29	8	8	1	1	2	2	3	12	1	1							81	3122 10
1781	12	23	8	7	1	1	2	2	3	11	1	1							72	2782 10
1782	12	22	8	7	1	1	2	3	2	9	1	1							69	2652 10
1783	9	19	8	5	1	1	1	1	3	11	1	1	2						60	2330 0
1784								2	4	10	1	1	3	2	1				20	810 0
1785								2	4	12	1	1	3	1	1				26	1030 0
1786								2	4	13	1		3	1	1				31	1200 0
1787								1	4	17	1		4	1	1	1			35	1317 10
1788								2	4	18	1		4	1	1	1			39	1447 10
1789								2	5	19	1		4	1	1				41	1667 10
1790								3	5	22	1		4	1	1				45	1725 0
1791								4	5	23	1		5	1	1				50	1812 0
1792								5	5	26	1		6	1	1				55	1977 0
1793								5	5	29	1		6	1	1				61	2132 0
1794								4	7	30	1		5	1	1				63	2272 0
1795								4	7	30	1		5	1	1				62	2242 0
1796								4	9	29	1		6	1	1				67	2362 0

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REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING TABLE.

The early years of the society were engaged in investigating the scene of its intended labours, and in thus laying a solid foundation for its future exertions. Before missionaries were appointed to particular places, it was resolved to send a clergyman to travel through the several governments of British America, and to preach therein, in order to awaken the people to a sense of the duties of religion.

The Rev. George Keith left England, with this view, in April 1702. In two years he travelled through ten distinct governments, extending 800 miles in length, and was both diligent and successful. In these labours he was greatly assisted by the Rev. John Talbot, who was chaplain of the ship in which Mr. Keith sailed, and became his associate in his travels.

This good beginning was followed up by other exertions; missionaries being sent out to New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and South Carolina: of the establishment and early history of which missions, Dr. Humphreys has given copious details. To these states the labours of the society, as will be seen by the table, were limited till 1734, when they were extended to Georgia and the Bahamas; in 1736, to Newfoundland; and, in 1749, to Nova Scotia.

In 1767 the support of the missionaries in South Carolina, which had been gradually diminishing, was wholly withdrawn, the state having made provision for their maintenance: this mission was, however, partially resumed in 1770, when a missionary was sent for the particular benefit of certain palatines from Germany, who resided in that state.

The exertions of the society had been gradually increasing as the British colonies in America advanced in population. A little before the time of the declaration of independence on the part of the present United States, these exertions had reached their height. In the troubles which ensued, they gradually declined; and in the year 1799, suffered a very sensible diminution. In 1784, soon after the acknowledgment of the independence of the states by this country, the missionaries were reduced to a very small number: in that year, indeed, the society allowed, besides the stipends to missionaries mentioned in the table, the sum of 695*l.* to nineteen missionaries who continued to officiate in the Independent States; and the further sum of 710*l.* to seventeen others then unavoidably unemployed.

Canada, New Brunswick, and the island of Cape Breton, now began to claim the attention of the society; and its exertions increased in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia; into these provinces various missionaries removed from the United States. Both into those states, and into the British provinces, the Episcopal government of the church has been since happily introduced: an object which the society had contemplated from the beginning; and it now reaps the reward of its persevering labours in the present promising state of religion in those countries.

It will be seen by the table that a missionary was sent to Guinea in the year 1751; it was intended that he should itinerate among the negroes: after a few years this was relinquished, but the attempt to benefit the negroes in Africa was resumed in 1766, by the appointment of the Rev. Philip Quaque, a native, educated in England, at the expense of the society, as missionary, catechist, and schoolmaster to the negroes on the Gold Coast; in which office he continued till his death, a period of about fifty years, when he was succeeded by the Rev. W. Phillip, chaplain to the African Company, who is also since dead. In 1787 a teacher was appointed to attend the negroes sent to Sierra Leone, but returned after a few years, on account of ill health.

But besides these attempts to benefit the negroes which appear in the preceding table, it is manifest, from various extracts given in this work, that the negro slaves in the British colonies were very early an object of the society's anxious care. All its missionaries were instructed to promote the good work of their conversion; nor did they labour in vain, numbers being brought to an intelligent communion with the church. The earliest attempts of this kind were made in the state of New York; and of these Dr. Humphreys has given a particular narration. In order to engage the masters of the slaves to promote their conversion, the society dispersed in the colonies a great number of copies of Bishop Fleetwood's sermon, preached in 1711; that sermon forcibly setting forth the duty of giving Christian instruction to the slaves. In 1725 this sermon was reprinted, and large numbers of it again distributed. Bishop Gibson became a second advocate for the conversion of the negroes: he addressed a "Letter to the Masters and Mistresses of Families in the English Plantations abroad," in which he exhorted them to encourage and promote the instruction of their negroes in the Christian faith: his lordship addressed a second "Letter to the Missionaries in the English Plantations," exhorting them to give their assistance toward the instruction of the negroes within their several parishes: soon after, the bishop wrote "An Address to Serious Christians." with a view to stir them up to assist the society in carrying on this work. These pieces are printed in Dr. Humphrey's history, and show the bishop to have been an able and zealous advocate of this good cause. The eminent services since rendered to it by Bishop Porteus, and now continued by Bishop Howley, have been already mentioned.

The aborigines of America were another object of the society's care. Dr. Humphreys gives a full account of the attempts of the missionaries to convert the Iroquois Indians, then bordering on the colony of New York. These attempts were extended, as circumstances offered, to other tribes; and many curious particulars respecting them are scattered through the annual abstracts of proceedings. In 1768, as will be seen in the table, a mission was begun in Florida: this was, in fact, the appointment of a catechist for the Indians on the Mosquito shore. The next year a missionary was added; and this attempt was continued, till it sunk, with others, under the change of political circumstances.

In 1796 the society began to make some allowance to schoolmasters in New South Wales, and afterwards granted 20*l.* per annum to two teachers in that colony, and the same sum to two others in Norfolk Island.

Of the number of missionaries, &c. mentioned in the table, seldom so

many as a fourth were catechists or schoolmasters previous to the independence of the States, the rest being missionaries; but, on occasion of the society's exertions in the British provinces, a greater proportion of schoolmasters and catechists was found requisite, being frequently more than a third of the whole number; and latterly, as may be seen by the subjoined list for the year 1818, constituting nearly half of the whole. The salaries of these teachers are comparatively small, varying from 5*l.* per annum to 20*l.*, as other advantages attend the appointments.

Besides the missionaries and schoolmasters enumerated in the table, the society maintained for many years several teachers in Barbadoes, out of the produce of an estate left to it in that island by General Codrington, in the year 1703.

The average expenditure of the society has much exceeded its regular income. Application has in consequence frequently been made for royal letters, authorising collections of charity, from house to house, throughout England and Wales, in furtherance of the society's designs. Such letters were accordingly granted at various times, as stated in the king's letter lately issued, and which forms the first article in this work. A collection which was thus made in 1741, amounted to somewhat more than 15,000*l.*; another, in 1751, to nearly 20,000*l.*; and another, in 1779, under the authority of His present Majesty, to 19,474*l.* 12*s.* 8*d.* His majesty contributing 500*l.* toward that sum.

Grants have latterly been made by parliament in aid of the society. It will be seen from the table, that in 1785 the expenditure rose to nearly double that of the preceding year; a grant from parliament having been obtained in support of the expenses of the society, more particularly in Nova Scotia, in virtue of which the salaries of the missionaries in that province were raised to 200*l.* per annum, having been before from 35*l.* to 100*l.* In the year 1816 parliament granted 5730*l.* in aid of the expenses of the society in the North American colonies generally: the stipends of all the missionaries were, in consequence, raised to 200*l.*; and some few, under particular circumstances, still higher. In 1817 the grant was 7860*l.*, and in 1818 it amounted to 8126*l.* 5*s.*

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY OF THE ARCHDEACONRY

OF

HUNTINGDON,

AT

THE PRIMARY VISITATION,

On the 13th, 14th, and 15th of May, 1812.

By T. F. MIDDLETON, D. D.

ARCHDEACON OF HUNTINGDON,

AND VICAR OF SAINT PANCRAS, MIDDLESEX.

TO

THE REVEREND

THE CLERGY OF THE ARCHDEACONRY

OF

HUNTINGDON,

THE FOLLOWING CHARGE,

HONOURED BY THEIR APPROBATION, AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THEIR FAITHFUL FRIEND

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

St. Pancras Vicarage,
15th June, 1812.

A

CHARGE, &c.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE partial judgment of the distinguished prelate, who has for so many years, to the great benefit of the Christian cause, presided over this diocese, has called me to a station, in which it becomes my duty to address this venerable assembly. In no circumstances of the church could I proceed to the performance of such a task without feelings of apprehension and mistrust: the topics, which on these occasions are offered to your attention, are always important, and they deeply affect the responsibility of him who is required to discuss them; but at the present period they are unusually momentous, and some of them are involved in more than ordinary perplexity: at no era since the revival of religion has error on the part of your advisers threatened more serious mischief, and at none have impending dangers been more likely to bewilder the judgment, or has prejudice been more unfavourable to the discovery or reception of the truth. Endeavouring to guard against the operation of whatever may mislead myself or you, I would direct your notice to some particulars intimately connected with the present condition of our church, as forming the fittest subject of this primary address.

Christianity, purified from the corruptions of popery, and uninfected with the dogmas of modern fanaticism, has been established in this realm; it has been incorporated with the civil government: it has its formularies of faith and worship,

its discipline, its priesthood, its hierarchy: it has provided for the maintenance of its ministers, for the uniformity of their doctrine, and for the instruction of youth in its own religious tenets.[1] The integrity of this constitution has been protected by legislative sanctions; and in specified cases the state has refused to entrust her safety in the hands of persons professing a faith different from her own. Such is the established church of England; and it originates, not in metaphysical abstractions or the fervours of a persecuting zeal, but in wisdom resulting from experience and a knowledge of the human heart. It has been found indispensable to the peace of society that some species of religion should be invested with ascendancy, and ascendancy can be maintained only by exclusion. It is desirable that the religion thus preferred should exactly accord in doctrine and discipline with the Scriptural standard; and in this particular no species of Christianity admits so easy and complete vindication as that of our church; yet even this is not *essential* to an establishment which is founded, not in theological truth, but in political expediency.[2] If, indeed, demonstrable and acknowledged truth were made the condition, to no species of faith would this pre-eminence be conceded: the professor of the worst perversion of Christianity must maintain that his own creed is the true one; and instead of an establishment forming a permanent bond of peace, we should have only the temporary domination of the strong, and the subjugation and persecution of the weak. Christians, however, who are partially excluded from civil advantages have still important claims: if political expediency require an establishment, justice demands

[1] The 77th, 78th, and 79th canons treat of the qualifications and duties of schoolmasters; and the 59th requires the clergy to catechise, and the people to send their children and dependants to be instructed.

[2] On this point there appears to be some misapprehension. We do not maintain, that because our religion is established, it is therefore true: at most this is only a presumption founded on the Scriptural knowledge, the great piety, the moderate views, and the tried constancy of our excellent reformers: its truth can be certainly deduced only from its agreement with Scripture. But though we do not argue that what is established must be true, we hold it to be even more unreasonable to infer, as some appear to do, that because it is established it is false: we deprecate unfounded insinuations against what is sometimes contemptuously called a state religion; as if it were a contrivance to uphold political abuses, or in any degree derived its character from that of the government, however unimpeachable. In this country, happily, the established religion needs not shrink from the test of Scripture, and of the practice and interpretation of the primitive ages; and we desire only that it may be referred to such a standard.

toleration: violence is not to be offered even to erroneous conviction: the exercise of religious worship when unconnected with political purposes or tendencies, falls not within the cognizance of the magistrate; he is to leave it where he found it, in the breast of the worshipper, and under the eye of God. The limits of this indefeasible right, though attempts are daily made to obscure them, are clearly defined: the criterion is an appeal to the conscience: Am I required to profess opinions, or to adopt a practice repugnant, as I believe, to the Word of God? My conscience revolts at the impiety, and is not to be coerced: Do I insist on being admitted to the civil distinctions which the state has reserved for the professors of other tenets? The plea of conscience fails, and gives place to that of ambition. So distinguishable to the unprejudiced understanding are the boundaries between toleration and establishment.

There is, however, a stage in the progress of public opinion, at which the wisest enactments of human policy are liable to be swept away in the torrent of innovation. The sanctions of law lose much of their strength when their fitness is overlooked in the tumult of the passions, or the numbers of those have greatly increased who are interested in subverting them. To that stage we appear to be rapidly advancing: if ever there was a time when our church derived an adventitious security from popular predilection, that period is past: the current is turned against us: its legitimate claims are not readily acknowledged: — the usefulness of the clergy is in danger of being depreciated: — religious liberty has degenerated into licentiousness; and in the present state of religious worship in a great part of the metropolis, the people will soon cease to know what are the distinguishing tenets of our church. In attempting a brief illustration of these several positions, I shall not seek to suppress or palliate unwelcome truths, believing that in a just estimate of our danger is our only safety.

Discussions have arisen, and are still going on, in which the claims of the establishment, though they are not the point at issue, are deeply and inevitably involved. Nothing, indeed, has happened which might not have been foreseen. The history of coalitions does not authorise us to expect a long con-

tinuance of cordial co-operation; and their expediency cannot subsequently be agitated without forcing into notice objects which were studiously kept out of sight when first the coalition was projected. A difference of views and interests is implied in the notion of such an alliance; and the seeds of discord are sown inadvertently, at the moment when we are sacrificing our fears and jealousies to a common cause. In a religious controversy thus generated, it is evident that the church cannot be a gainer: its claims, if not urged, will certainly not be recognised: and yet the superiority, which is not felt and acknowledged, it is invidious to assert. In such a dilemma are we now involved: establishment implies ascendancy: it makes the church the rule, while it classes the sects as exceptions: prerogative is incommunicable, or it is nothing; yet these principles are overlooked in the proceedings of the day, and are but faintly maintained in the writings of our controversialists. It is the practice tacitly to assume that all Christians are on the footing of equality, not only as Christians, which they unquestionably are, standing in one general relation towards God, but also in their relation to a church enjoying certain civil sanctions, and professing certain peculiar doctrines: but this is obviously untrue; and not less so is the consequence deduced from it, that all Christians, without dereliction of interest or consistency, may further the views of any sect or sects engaged in a commendable undertaking. The views of churchmen and dissenters cannot be absolutely the same, however true it may be that they have somewhat, and even much, in common; and the engagement not to propagate peculiar tenets, even when strictly adhered to, has more of the semblance of an equitable compromise, than it has of the reality. In fact the parties do not meet upon equal terms: the sects are some of them of a negative rather than a positive character, and even in point of doctrine have not much to give up; while others may calculate on the power of private zeal to compensate the effects of public forbearance; they may prudently submit to temporary inconvenience in the hope of future aggrandisement; and they possess, in every controversy with the church, the singular advantage, that they are not bound to any definite principles, but can relinquish, at least for the moment, the ground which

is found to be untenable.[1] The case of the church is different; and so far from lamenting this circumstance, we regard it as an argument in behalf of an establishment: the church has no power to abandon its tenets, and it has no right to suppress them: its positive doctrines, and the public profession of them, are parts of the charter by which it holds its existence.

These reflections, you will readily perceive, have been suggested by two recent institutions. It must, however, be admitted, that the Bible Society, and what are called the *Lancasterian* schools, though connected by a manifest analogy, stand on somewhat different grounds. Every churchman must wish for the dispersion of the Bible, but he will wish for something more, and the deficiency may possibly be supplied: it is possible that every subscribing churchman may accompany his gift with explanatory treatises and comments; perhaps, it is possible, that the sectaries may not extend their liberality beyond their own pale, in the hope of making proselytes; but in the case of the schools, even these saving possibilities are excluded by the very condition of the question: there the sacrifice on the part of the church is not contingent, but certain; it is preliminary to the whole proceeding; the abandonment of religious instruction and of our church catechism, the great outwork of our church, is the basis on which we are to treat; its ascendancy is not merely not recognised, it is disclaimed[2]; and the method pursued is the most effect-

[1] This privilege has not been overlooked in modern times: the Unitarians will not be regarded as Socinians, though they go far beyond the impiety of the Racovian catechism: and the "REFUTATION OF CALVINISM," which has exhausted all the stores of erudition and argument applicable to its subject, is asserted to have little or no reference to existing errors! "*Quo tenearn vultus mutantem Protea nodo?*"

[2] "If any particular *sect*," says Mr. Lancaster, "obtained the principal care in a national system of education, that part would soon be likely to possess the the greatest power and influence in the state." Here the national church is by implication made to be a sect; and we are tacitly cautioned against the consequences of its ascendancy. More explicit is the language of a late resolution, in which thanks are voted "to the first city in the world for its approbation and sanction to those *principles of toleration*, the *universal application* of which forms *the distinguishing features* of the Lancasterian institution." It cannot fail to strike even the dullest understanding, that whatever is in its nature favourable to toleration, such as is here plainly intended, must be prejudicial to the establishment. It cannot mean the liberty to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, for that is not in question: the toleration here spoken of is a forbearance to produce any early bias in favour of the national church; to say, in favour of any system of belief whatever, is not enough, since toleration always supposes power, which resides only in the establishment: we never speak of Quakers to-

ual which ingenuity could have devised for accomplishing its destruction. If this desperate empiricism had continued to engross the public patronage, in another generation the principles of our church, however they might have been preserved in the dead-letter of our liturgy, assuredly would not have lived in the hearts and associations of the people.

Another circumstance, to which we should advert, is the growing opinion, that the word of God is sufficiently intelligible without the aid of interpretation. If this be true, a learned clergy has no duties to perform, which are not merely ministerial: and we must relinquish much of the estimation and the means of usefulness, which we have hitherto enjoyed. On such a subject I am aware that it is necessary to proceed with the most guarded moderation. To maintain that the Scriptures are utterly unintelligible to the great mass of mankind, is, in its consequence, a plea for restoring the fallen fabric of papal infallibility: but there is danger in the other extreme, which goes directly to authorise all the extravagance, which has disgraced Christianity and distracted the world, and to set up a worse than papal infallibity in every man's own judgment, or more frequently his own imagination: it is to give confidence to ignorance, to administer to pride, and to multiply division to infinity. But neither the language of Scripture nor the institutions of Christianity countenance such an opinion. We are reminded, indeed, of our Saviour's declaration, "If any man will do the will of God, he shall "know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, [or, whether "I speak of myself."[1]] Our Lord herein asserts, what abundant experience has verified, that the great obstacle

lerating Unitarians; the church, therefore, is the party whose forbearance is to be the foundation of the benefits projected by the society; and what Mr. L. had endeavoured to represent as a perfect neutrality towards every species of Christian faith, is now found to be a pointed hostility towards that which is established. The resolution, indeed, speaks of the *universality* with which the principles of toleration are applied in the Lancasterian institution: but this circumstance, if the term toleration has been rightly explained, will hardly recommend the institution to the patronage of churchmen: such *universality* is no other than the disposition universally manifested by sectaries to take advantage of the forbearance of the church, when it consents to abandon the only means of preserving its existence. See Resolutions of the Lancasterian Society, at its meeting on the 9th of May.

[1] See Mr. Dealtry's examination of Dr. Marsh's inquiry, p. 7. Mr. D. has not cited the clause included in brackets; which, however, is necessary to the true exposition of the text.

to the reception of the Gospel would be found in the unwillingness of men to relinquish their sinful habits for evangelical holiness. You will not, probably, in this declaration see any thing which bears upon the question. Neither is it a legitimate inference, that if the Scriptures are not generally intelligible, "Infinite Wisdom has not "furnished us with the most perfect means of instruction."[1] The fallacy lies in assuming an imperfection in the mode of inculcating divine truth through the instrumentality of man: yet, perhaps, it will be found, so far as we are capable of deciding on such a question, as What are the best means which providence can employ for effecting its purposes? that the contrary is the truth. It might, indeed, be sufficient to observe that such instrumentality pervades every other part of the divine economy in the moral world. Analogy would lead us to expect the same in this particular instance: and the whole of this proceeding is easily resolvable into God's benevolence. He appears to have uniformly acted on the principle of making us members one of another, and of connecting us by the ties of mutual dependance; and, perhaps, it is in the instruction of the ignorant, and in unfolding to them the Volume of Salvation, that the best sympathies of the heart are awakened, and that we especially feel, how much "more blessed it is to give than to receive." But we may appeal to scripture and the history of the primitive church. The treasurer of the Ethiopian princess, being a proselyte on his return from Jerusalem, appears not to have been more than ordinarily incompetent to read the Scriptures; and yet we are told, that to the question, Whether he understood a passage, in which Isaiah predicts the sacrifice to be made by the Redeemer? he replied, "How can I, unless some man "should guide me?" Our Saviour, too, after his resurrection, "expounded in all the Scriptures the things relating to "himself." We know, also, from a contemporary Apostle,

[1] Mr. Dealtry, *ibid.* He has, indeed, farther on, p. 14., reminded the reader, that in this country we have an established priesthood and a regular parochial service, and that therefore the people are not unassisted in the interpretation of Scripture. Is this fact adduced in order to annul, or only to qualify the effect of his preceding argument? If to annul it, then was the argument gratuitous; if only to qualify it, its force in some degree remains, and it is open to refutation. In either case his reasoning is similar to that which we frequently hear from persons less capable of stating it with precision, and not at all disposed to object to its consequences.

that the δυσνόητα of St. Paul, "as well as the other Scrip-"tures, may by the unlearned and unstable be wrested to "their own destruction." Our Saviour is recorded to have given to the world pastors and teachers "for the perfecting "of the saints and for the edifying of the body of Christ;" and among the gifts imparted to these were "the Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge," which were deemed important even to inspired teachers. A regular ministry was the superstructure, which the apostles raised upon this foundation; and the homilies of the fathers, which are still preserved to us, consist, in great measure, of expositions of Scripture: they felt the difficulties of these writings, and they scruple not to avow it[1]; and it were well, if their practice of familiar exposition were more generally retained.—It will not be imagined, that this reasoning is at all adverse to the great protestant axiom, That the Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: we are not advocates for the glosses and traditions of the Targumists and Talmudists of Rome: we pretend not to any exclusive right to the study of the Sacred Volume, but profess our warm gratitude to learned laymen for many admirable treatises maintaining the doctrines, and enforcing the duties, of our common Christianity[2]; in asserting the usefulness of a regular clergy as expositors of Scripture, we acknowledge that we are forbidden to add unto the Word of God, or to diminish aught from it; we are "not to have dominion over the faith" of our flocks: we are only to be "helpers of their joy."

A third topic, which appears to be of importance in forming a just estimate of the condition of the established church, is the present state of toleration. The well-known act was passed at a period, when the accession of a foreign prince to the throne of England, especially after the bigoted reign of James II., made it prudent, as well as just to grant every safe

[1] Scripturæ non in legendo consistunt, sed in intelligendo. Hieron. adv. Luciferianos sub fin.

Etiam quæ plana videntur in Scripturis, plena sunt quæstionibus. Idem, Comment. in Matt. xv.

[2] The memory of Addison, of Lord Lyttleton, of Gilbert West, of Jacob Bryant, of Granville Sharp, and of many other laymen, will ever be cherished by the clergy of the church of England; and it is gratifying to be assured, that for the "Earnest Exhortation to a frequent reception of the Holy Sacrament," we are indebted to a gentleman of high rank in the profession of the law, *James Allen Park*, Esq, king's counsel.

indulgence to non-conformists. The preamble of that act sets forth, that "some ease to *scrupulous consciences* in the exercise of religion may be an effectual means to unite their majesties' protestant subjects in interest and affection." The act, therefore, was plainly intended to strengthen the state; but its modern operation seems to be principally to weaken the church. Something, indeed, of this very early appeared: and various attempts were made to pass efficacious bills against occasional conformity. Of "scrupulous consciences," I should be sorry to speak, otherwise than I feel, without profound reverence and awe: but we may surely regret, that many, who avowedly have not any scruples, communicate with the scrupulous, as if it were merely to thin the ranks of the national religion[1]. It is very well known, that a large proportion of those, who have ceased to communicate with the church, profess to receive our creeds, our articles, our whole liturgy; they sometimes assure us, that they are of the church, notwithstanding that an apostle has made communion to be the only criterion in questions of this kind[2]. It will not, however, be urged, that the act of toleration was intended to hold out an asylum to seceders of this description: it was said by a very learned and liberal judge, Chief Justice Holt, within a few years of passing the act, that it was not made for professed churchmen, whose consciences allowed them sometimes to go to meetings[3]. Yet a difference has been remarked between the original and the modern construction of the statute, which, as some contend, is now too rigorously interpreted[4]. If it be so, some apology may be found in the looseness of its language, as well as in the modern abuse of it. It proceeded on the supposition that secession implies

[1] In the case of the justices of Derbyshire, it was contended by Morton and Blackstone, that it might be a serious question, how far methodists, not being dissenters from the church of England, but only pretending to observe her doctrine and discipline with greater purity than their neighbours, are objects of the toleration act, and privileged to meet in conventicles. Burn's Eccl. Law, vol. ii. p. 205. ed. 1797. Yet that they avail themselves of the act is admitted in the recent case of the King *v.* Agar.

[2] 1 John ii. 19. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us."

[3] Burn's Ecc. Law, vol. ii. p. 201. edit. 1797.

[4] See "A Legal Argument on the Toleration Act, by a Barrister at Law, of Lincoln's-Inn, 1812;" and the able "Answer" to it, published since this charge was delivered, "by a Barrister of the Temple," *Geo. Wharton Marriott*, Esq.

dissent: in the controversies of that day, any other secession was rarely heard of: sinful terms of lay-communion were admitted to be the only lawful pretext for separation from the church; and very frivolous objections, as the wearing of surplices, and the cross in baptism, were thought more decent than an acknowledgment, that the separation was altogether gratuitous. But whatever may have been the intent or the abuse of the act of toleration, the extension of its indulgences, and still more the entire abolition of the test, merits the most dispassionate consideration, not only of the friends, but of the enemies of the establishment. The latter cannot hope, under any other ecclesiastical government, for a greater degree of religious liberty, than they at present enjoy; for the ascendancy of *some* religious denomination would be the inevitable consequence of the overthrow of the church. It may not, perhaps, be candid to suppose, that such an event is in their contemplation, and that a strict equalization of political advantages is contended for with the hope of establishing a superiority; and yet history in some measure countenances the suspicion. The Romanists, not the most tolerant of religionists, were, in the reign of Charles II., zealous advocates for a general toleration, evidently with a view to their own aggrandisement [1]: and according to the historian and apologist of the puritans, even they objected not to an establishment, provided it were modelled upon their own principles [2]. But whatever be the views or the dangers of others, our own course is plain: the few remaining legal checks are our only barrier against the renewal of tumult and tyranny: they are the only security, which distinguishes our

[1] It was admitted by Colman, the popish emissary, "Possibly I might be of an opinion, that popery might come in, if liberty of conscience had been granted." Trial, p. 101. "When the declaration for toleration was published, great endeavours were used by the court to persuade the non-conformists to make addresses and compliments upon it: but few were so blind, as not to see what was aimed at by it." Burnet's Own Times, vol. ii. p. 525. edit. 1725.

[2] "Both parties (the court party, at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, and the puritans) agreed too well in asserting the necessity of an uniformity of public worship, and of calling in the sword of the magistrate for the support of their several principles. The standard of uniformity, according to the bishops, was the queen's supremacy and the laws of the land: according to the puritans, the decrees of provincial and national synods allowed and enforced by the civil magistrate." Neal. vol. i. 147. edit. 1733.

And in the reign of Charles I. in 1641., says the same writer, the puritans "proposed to settle an uniform model of government for the church of England, to be confirmed by parliament." vol. ii. p. 468.

condition from that of our ancestors two centuries ago: and if we would not recal the days, when the use of a prayer book in a private family was punishable by fine and imprisonment, we shall not willingly forego them [1].

The last circumstance, to which I would call your attention in this brief survey, is the state of religious worship in the metropolis. With this, it may be thought, that you have little concern: yet, perhaps, of all the evils which we have to deplore, this is the most generally alarming. The want of churches is often complained of, but the extent of this mischief is not always known. In two parishes, of which the population somewhat exceeds that of this whole archdeaconry, the poor are almost altogether excluded from communion with the established church [2]: they have little or no accommodation: the parish churches are so small, as to be suited only to ordinary villages: and the chapels are private property, and are appropriated to the convenience of the rich. The same evil, in different degrees, exists elsewhere: the consequence is unavoidable; that the poor are either driven to the conventicle, or they live without the public exercise of religion. It is chiefly to be ascribed to this great cause, that the lower classes throughout the capital appear to be losing the distinguishing principles of the national faith: the less informed do not always perceive what is meant by being of the church of England: they annex to the term little more than an abhorrence of the corruptions of popery: this feeling happily remains unextinguished: but here they stop: they suppose it to be sufficient that they are protestants [3]: they are not aware, that it is of much importance what place of protestant worship they attend, but they frequent the church or the meeting, or both, as their curiosity, or taste or convenience may lead

[1] Blackstone's Comment. vol. iv. p. 53. edit. 1787.

[2] At the late census, the parish of St. Mary-le-bone returned a population of more than 75,000; and that of St. Pancras 46,333, with an average increase (supposed to be much below the present) of 1,400 per ann., during the ten preceding years. The parish church will not contain 200 persons.

[3] "Our predecessors in legislation were not so irrational (not to say impious) as to form an operose ecclesiastical establishment, and even to render the state itself in some degree subservient to it, when their religion, if such it might be called, was nothing more than a mere *negation* of some other, without any positive idea either of doctrine, discipline, worship, or morals. The church of Scotland knows as little of protestantism *undefined*, as the church of England and Ireland do." Mr. Burke's Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe. Works, vol. vi. p. 316. 318.

them. Parochial communion, on which the reformers laid so much stress [1], is not considered as having any paramount claims: Parochial limits are not always known, and when known are not always regarded: the offices of baptism and of visiting the sick are not unfrequently performed by aliens; and in numerous instances there is reason to fear, that they are altogether neglected. It were a delusion to imagine, that the influence of these evils does not extend beyond their immediate sphere of action: the indifference which they produce towards the establishment, must sooner or later be felt in the remotest corners of the kingdom.

If such, then, be the present state of our church, it becomes us well to consider, what are the means still left us of maintaining its stability. It is frequently alleged by those, who have withdrawn from us, that if the clergy were more zealous in the discharge of their duties, there would be no seceders. Many of them may be deeply persuaded of the truth of this opinion: there are among them numerous instances of sincere piety, of active benevolence, and of steady loyalty; and we have greatly to lament, that the weight of their personal example is not given to the cause of Christian unity and peace. We know, and we can demonstrate, that fervent devotion and holiness of life are attainable, if any where, in communion with our church: we might refer to living authorities; we might cite the annals of the dead: and it cannot be unknown, that the most bigotted adherents to what are usually denominated high-church principles, the non-juring clergy and laity, were distinguished by piety, some of them so rigid, that in these days it might be deemed enthusiasm: the names and the writings of Ken, Kettlewell, Dodwell, Nelson, and Law, will immediately recur to your

[1] It is usual with some, who would vindicate their deviation from the practice or doctrine of the established church, to appeal to the *Reformers*. If by the reformers be meant the persons, who corrupted the pure doctrines of the English reformation by opinions imbibed at Frankfort or Geneva, our church is not much interested in defending their orthodoxy. In the year 1548 we find Cranmer visiting his diocese; and among the articles which related to the laity, inquiries were directed to be made concerning "such as contemned their own parish church, and went elsewhere." Strype's Cranmer, fol. p. 183. We read also in the same historian, "Now that the liberty of the gospel began to be allowed, divers false opinions and unsound doctrines began to be vented with it. Several of these heretics were convented before Cranmer, Latimer, and others," and abjured their errors: among which are enumerated the leading doctrines of calvinists, socinians, and baptists. Strype, p. 178—181.

recollection. But it cannot be doubted, that this defence of secession is much too unlimited. In what era of the Christian church have there not been seceders? In the primitive ages, when the bishops and clergy lived the lives of ascetics, and died in the cause of Christ, we read of separation; and even in the days of the apostles the work of division had begun. In truth, the passions operate on the side of non-conformity: the love of liberty finds its gratification in a supposed independence of opinion: ambition, lost amidst a crowd of competitors, has obtained distinction in a sect; and, doubtless, not unfrequently, in the deceitfulness of the heart, pride under the aspect of abstraction from the world has passed for Christian humility, and vanity, soothed by popular applause, has imagined that it was actuated by a zeal for God. Notwithstanding this extenuation of the charge, that secession is wholly imputable to the negligence of the clergy, we are impelled by every motive, which can apply to our interest and our endless responsibility, to ask ourselves seriously, What is our especial duty at the present crisis?

It is consoling to observe, that if we have heretofore been chargeable with inattention to the general interests of our church, our energies are at length called forth. The venerable Society for promoting Christian Knowledge has, within the last year, received an accession of strength and activity far greater than in any similar preceding period: it has become the rallying point of those who would preserve our constitution in church and state; and its deliberations are the most important to the maintenance of the true principles of our establishment, of any which have been holden since convocations fell into disuse. It is, however, needless to pursue this topic. Your sense of its high character has been marked by your formation of a district committee in connexion with the parent institution; and it is impossible that I should suggest any hint for its conduct, which is not comprised in its own resolutions. — Next, and scarcely second in importance, are the means now adopted for training the children of the church of England in the principles of the national faith. It were exceedingly to be desired, that in every market-town, or even considerable village, assistance were lent to this great undertaking: without such co-operation, it is impossible that the scheme should ever be productive of

the benefits proposed: the education of the poor on such a plan is necessarily local; and schools cannot be conducted or established, unless by those who reside in the vicinity.

After all, it must not be dissembled, that the maintenance of our church and of true religion, which is involved in the issue, will greatly depend on the personal estimation of the clergy; and we ought not to imagine, that this estimation will altogether be withholden from the conscientious and zealous discharge of our duties. It is right that we should be informed of the dangers of our situation, and of the difficulties which obstruct our career: but the end should be rather to stimulate our exertions, than to induce despair or apathy. Our observation must convince us, that there still exists among mankind a disposition to reverence the clerical character, wherever it is suitably maintained: in truth, this feeling is intimately connected with the approbation and love of Christianity; for in no condition of human society is its excellence as a rule of faith and manners displayed to greater advantage than in the life of a truly Christian pastor. Piety fervent, yet untinctured with fanaticism; zeal regulated by discretion: benevolence directed to the instruction of the ignorant, the consolation of the afflicted, the allaying of animosities, and to the temporal and eternal happiness of man; and, above all, a proof from our consistency, that these are not merely official, but are the fruits of our faith in Christ, and that we expect to be saved only by the means which we prescribe to others, — such are the powers with which we still are entrusted, of conciliating the affections of our people: and in their effects they will far exceed any abstract disquisitions on the beauty or the truth of the Gospel. In this age, especially, every thing is assuming a practical character: in science this may be regretted, as introducing sciolism, and as tending to lower the standard and to narrow the range of intellectual exertion: but it is not so in religion: this is every man's concern; and its ministers cannot propose to themselves a higher object of their calling, than to guide the feet of the poor and simple into the way of peace. In the country, you will permit me to add, from my own experience, that the clergy enjoy facilities of usefulness, for which their brethren in the metropolis cannot reasonably hope. A village pastor knows, and is known to, all his parishioners: he may

ascertain their peculiar wants and weaknesses: he may interpose his counsel without incurring the painful charge of presumption or officiousness: he is generally equal in rank, and superior in education, to all around him: and his task, for the most part, is the easy one of condescension. These advantages we shall not surely suffer to be lost: we shall regard them as the precious talent committed to our care, and as a sacred trust from that Being, of whose mysteries we are the ministers and stewards. We shall thus at least, through the Divine assistance, work out our own salvation, and we ought not to doubt that we shall become instrumental in the hand of Providence to the maintenance of that church, which in our nation is the only sure "pillar and ground of the truth." Its cause is not lightly to be abandoned[1]: it has still the sanction of law, which requires only to be strengthened by that of public opinion: it has still a well-educated and a learned clergy, who may accomplish much by activity and perseverance: and it has friends, who are anxious to plead in its behalf, if we will not supply arguments to their opponents by our own secularity or supineness. In itself it presents no difficulties to its advocates: it is established with a view to Christian edification and the public tranquillity; it is tolerant and even liberal towards all who differ from it; in its discipline it is apostolical, and its doctrine is of God.

[1] In conclusion, I would suggest to those whom it principally concerns, the following sentiment of one who cannot justly be charged with intolerance: Quanto magis decet sic affectos esse Christianos, et *principes* et *doctores*, ut cupiant posteris relinquere ecclesiam rectè constitutam et tranquillam. Nec verò ullius rei cura potior et antiquior esse magnis viris debet, præsertim iis, *qui sedent ad gubernacula*; qui utinam in tantis ecclesiæ calamitatibus aliquando sibi hanc honestissimam vocem subjiciant, *ἀναβλέψωμεν ὀρθοῖς ὄμμασιν, ἀποδῶμεν τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις* ΤΗΝ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΝ. Melancthon. Ep. 109. lib. 1.

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE SOCIETY

FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,

On the 23d March, 1813,

TO

THE REV. C. A. JACOBI,

THEN ABOUT TO PROCEED AS ONE OF THEIR MISSIONARIES TO INDIA:

BY

T. F. MIDDLETON, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF HUNTINGDON.

TO

THE VENERABLE

SOCIETY

FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

THE FOLLOWING CHARGE,

DELIVERED BY THEIR APPOINTMENT, AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR UNANIMOUS REQUEST,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

A

CHARGE, &c.

REVEREND,
AND BELOVED IN CHRIST,

In compliance with the commands of this venerable Society, and in conformity with an usage suggested by feelings of brotherly affection and of Christian zeal, I am to address you on the interesting relation which you have contracted with us, and on the momentous duties to which it has given birth. The performance of such a task in the presence of persons pre-eminent in our nation for their knowledge and their piety, might impress the most presumptuous with a sense of his own insufficiency: yet such is the occasion of this day's solemnity, that it can hardly fail to awaken the most torpid to congenial feeling and reflection. The character in which you stand before us, it is impossible to contemplate with indifference: as a stranger, you are entitled to our courtesy: as a Christian, to our benevolence: as a scholar, to our respect; but you have higher pretensions than these: we regard you as invested with the functions of an apostle; you are known to us, as one animated with the desire of extending the light of the blessed Gospel to those, who still sit in darkness and in the shadow of death: with this view, you have renounced the ties of kindred and of country, and prospects highly flattering to youthful ambition: you are ready to encounter the perils of the ocean, and the danger of disease in a foreign clime: you are prepared to contend against the sophistry of the subtle and the malice of the wicked; and you have solicited our assistance in the prosecution of your holy purpose, seeking only food and raiment, and resolving to be therewith content. With such pretensions you prefer your claim to our reverence and admiration: and I doubt not that I faithfully express the sentiment of

this august assembly, when I declare, that, in the bosom of every individual, the magnitude of your undertaking and the sanctity of your character are most honourably appreciated and deeply felt.

The remote region, which you have selected as the theatre of your exertions, does indeed loudly call for the labours of pious and disinterested men. Amidst all the darkness, which still envelopes the Heathen world, the superstitions of Hindustan are calculated to excite in the mind of the philosopher, as well as of the Christian, in a peculiar degree, emotions of pity and horror. Very far removed from a state of barbarism, retaining even the vestiges of ancient science and refinement, gifted with faculties, which culture might elevate to the proudest eminence of intellectual attainment, mild in their nature and humane in their deportment, the Hindus present the most lamentable spectacle of religious depravation, and serve to demonstrate how weak and wretched is human nature in its most favoured circumstances, unblessed with a knowledge of the true God and of His reasonable service. You are doubtless well acquainted with the horrid rites of the religion of Brahma: you know the practice of exposing infants, or offering them to the Ganges: you are not ignorant that the widow, perhaps in the prime of life, places herself on the funeral pile of her deceased lord, or, according to the superstition of a particular caste, is buried alive with him: you have read of the awful scenes at Juggernaut, where the country for miles around exhibits the bones of voluntary victims slain beneath the wheels of the car of an idol[1]; and you have contemplated with disgust the variety of tortures which the deluded devotee inflicts on himself, in order to merit the favour of his gods. What practices more repugnant to natural feeling and unperverted reason have the annals of the most savage superstition brought to light? What more atrocious enormities have obtained among the most ignorant and ferocious islanders, on whom the light of science never beamed, and whose faculties are little elevated above the instinct of the brute creation? It should seem, indeed, not only that the natural powers of the human mind, however cultivated, are incapable, without a Divine Revelation, of

[1] Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 19, &c.

attaining to a knowledge of the will of God, but that the progress of refinement, unaccompanied with instruction in the ways of the Almighty, serves only to lead man further from the simplicity of Divine truth: it should seem, that in the absence of the True Light, science serves only to multiply the delusions, on which he is ever ready to rest his hopes: primeval traditions become gradually more and more distorted by the perverseness of human ingenuity: and the wild conjectures of the philosophy of paganism are embellished and consecrated in the verse of its poets.

To dissipate the darkness of the Heathen world,—to instruct mankind in the ways and in the will of God,—and to unfold to them the mysteries of redemption,—our Saviour pronounced to His chosen followers the memorable injunction, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the "name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy "Ghost." In furtherance of this end, the apostles were endued with miraculous powers: yet even they were not taught to expect that their path would be smooth, or that their courage and constancy would not be subjected to severe trials. In an undertaking similar to theirs, you are now to engage: you cannot, however, hope, though we doubt not that in such a work God will be with you, that the same assistance which was vouchsafed to the apostles, will be also extended to you: while you may reasonably apprehend, that in the difficulties which you will have to encounter, you will more closely tread in their steps. Were I at once to proceed to the brighter and more animating part of your prospect, without urging you to prepare and fortify your mind against inevitable discouragements, I should ill discharge my duty, whilst I might seem to derogate from the strength of your holy resolution.

It must be admitted, that the progress of Christianity in India has not been such as might have been expected, considering at how early a period the name of Christ was carried to its shores. Whether Pantænus in the second century proceeded to India, or went no farther than the happy Arabia[1], it is certain that the peninsula possessed a knowledge of Christ early in the fourth century: no doubt is

[1] Mosheim, vol. i. p. 149.

entertained, that Frumentius, the apostle of Abyssinia, became an Indian bishop [1]: it stands upon record, that the primate of India was present and subscribed his name to the proceedings of the council of Nice [2]: and the Mohammedan writers admit, that Christianity prevailed in India, before the introduction of Islamism. [3] From that period, however, it declined: and though it was never extinct, having been preserved, if no where else, at least in the Syrian churches [4], little appears to have been attempted for its diffusion, till the time when the Portuguese extended their commerce to the East. But the genius of Popery has never been favourable to the legitimate propagation of the Gospel. To do evil, that good may come, is a dangerous violation of Christian morality, and vainly seeks its apology in the extent and benevolence of its views: but the missionaries of Rome, while they have employed corrupt means, have not always proposed the purest ends. Not only have they had recourse to false signs and lying wonders [5], not only have they pretended to miraculous gifts, and in some instances have imposed themselves on their converts in the acceptable character of Brahmins [6]: but even the object sought by these artifices has been something very distinguishable from the disinterested promulgation of the Gospel. The power and the pomp of the see of Rome have evidently been their aim: the number of professing converts has been regarded, rather than the soundness of their faith or the purity of their practice: baptism has been administered to those who would receive it, without fully understanding its sacred obligations; and the splendour of ceremonies [7] has for the moment attracted proselytes, who could not easily be reconciled to the scandal of the Cross, and the worship of God in spirit and in truth. It is asserted by St. Francis Xavier, that he baptized upwards of a million of infidels [8]: of which pretended conversion, however, very small remains are now visible. Neither was the conduct of the missionaries of Rome

[1] Sozomen. Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. cap. 24.
[2] Asiat. Researches, vol. x. p. 70. [3] Ibid. p. 79.
[4] The extraordinary inattention shown to the Syrian Christians has called forth a censure from Gibbon. Hist. vol. viii. p. 349.
[5] Bishop Douglas's Criterion, p. 72. [6] Mosheim, vol. v. p. 11.
[7] Society's Report for 1776, p. 81.
[8] Tennant's Thoughts on India, pp. 172. and 230.

towards their fellow-Christians at all calculated to illustrate the benevolent character of the Gospel: one of their first acts was to violate the freedom and to vitiate the purity of the primitive and happy Syro-Indian Church[1]: and the establishment of the Inquisition at Goa in all its horrors still remains to stigmatize the Christian name. But if the church of Rome, from its spirit and the tendency of its proceedings, was little adapted to the diffusion of Christianity, we should also consider how inadequate have been the efforts of Protestants. Little more than a century has now elapsed since the commencement of the Danish mission to Tranquebar, and its subsequent connexion with our Society. Of the labours of that mission, of the piety, the zeal, and the learning of the persons, who have generally composed it, the records are in our hands. Their numbers, however, when we consider with what difficulties they have contended, have been insufficient to produce any very extensive effect. They have frequently complained, and not always, it is feared, without reason, that the lives of the bulk of European Christians have counteracted and in great measure defeated the most zealous labours of the mission.[2] They have found it of no avail to show that the precepts of Christ inculcate whatever is holy and good, while the practice of Christians has been marked by a more than heathen contempt of religious obligations. To as little purpose was it to urge, that the persons, whose examples were thus pernicious, were placed in circumstances unfavourable to Christian faith and morals; that they had left their native country, before their religious habits and convictions had been fully established; that they were early introduced into all the dissipations of an enervating climate; that they had sometimes no other view than the rapid accumulation of wealth; and that even if their habits had originally been those of regularity and piety, they had little means of confirming and preserving them in a country, where their national religion has often no visible representative, and where the Christian Sabbath is distinguishable only by the appear-

[1] See the preface to Danish Conferences, 1719.

[2] "Who knows," says the excellent Swartz, "but God may remove some of the great obstacles to the propagation of the Gospel? Should a reformation take place among the Europeans, it would no doubt be the greatest blessing to the country." — SWARTZ's *Apology*, *Society's Report*, 1795.

ance of the British flag.[1] Enlightened candour might know how to make allowance for these disadvantages; but we could not expect it in the Mohammedan or Hindu, when those among ourselves, who alone have power to remedy the evil, have not yet thought it of sufficient magnitude to demand their interference.[2]

But it is not merely in the neglected and depressed state of public worship among the European Christians of India, that you will encounter obstacles to the success of your endeavours. You will find the Hindu possessed with inveterate prejudices in behalf of his own superstition: he will tell you of its remote and inscrutable antiquity, of the mystic sanctity attached to his sacred books, and of the austerity and excruciating penances of fakirs and devotees: you will find him imputing a high degree of merit to self-immolation and other practices which Christianity forbids: the appalling spectacles and thrilling rites of his own faith have deeply impressed his imagination; and to the almost total want of Christian observances he will naturally oppose the powerful associations, which his mind derives from the celebration of a hundred festivals in the year.[3]

Perhaps, however, the most formidable impediment to the favourable issue of your undertaking, will be found in the consequences which follow upon conversion. The loss of caste is among the most alarming punishments which social ordinances have ever devised. To be interdicted from the ordinary intercourse of life: to be regarded as unclean and abominable in the sight of his nearest relatives; to be supposed to communicate pollution by the mere touch[4]; and to be cut off from all the resources of honest industry[5]; such is the condition of the Christianized Hindu with respect to his countrymen; and unhappily he finds but insufficient encouragement in the new society by which he is adopted. It has rarely been the policy of our Indian government to patronise converts[6]; and the Christian societies, which have

[1] Buchanan's Memoir on an Ecclesiastical Establishment in India, p. 4.

[2] Since this was written, the question of the expediency of an ecclesiastical establishment for India has been agitated in parliament.

[3] Buchanan's Memoir, p. 51. [4] Crawford's Sketches, vol. i. p. 124.

[5] Society's Report for 1776, p. 87.

[6] Buchanan's Christian Researches, p. 89. It is otherwise in Ceylon: the Dutch, while in possession of that island, never gave an official appointment to

hitherto been formed, are scarcely in a condition to compensate such sacrifices, or to furnish abundant employment.

Causes, such as these, have, notwithstanding the length of time during which the Gospel has been known in India, retarded and circumscribed its progress; and it must be admitted, that if no countervailing sources of encouragement presented themselves, you might feel that you were engaging in an almost fruitless task: but these, I trust, are by no means wanting; and by the blessing of God they will be sufficient to stimulate and reward your exertions in His holy cause.

Permit me, then, to call your attention to the interesting fact, that, notwithstanding every discouragement, the Word of God is found to prevail, and the number of native Christians in India is observed to increase: a recent estimate makes them amount to 900,000 persons[1]; and what perhaps is more to our present purpose, the immediate fruits of that mission, with which you are associated, are becoming more apparent. Some years have elapsed since our Society was presented with the sermon of an ordained convert from Hinduism[2]: we hope that other equally honourable specimens of the sound Christian knowledge, the simple eloquence, and the genuine piety attainable by Hindus, will be laid before us: and we have learnt with satisfaction that four other Tamul catechists have lately been called to the ministry in the presence of the aged Sattianaden.[3] It is from the labours of ordained converts, that we expect the most favourable results; and the paucity of such as have been altogether fit to receive ordination might have been numbered among the impediments to the wider diffusion of the Gospel. For the use of such it is gratifying to be informed, that Tamul books, explaining the elements of Christian knowledge, abound. They are the instruments by which, under the guidance of God, His holy faith will find its way to the hearts of the heathens; and an interesting memoir, just received, assures us, that the natives have lately shown a more than ordinary readiness to be instructed. We know

any native who was not a Christian; which practice is continued by His Majesty's government. Ibid.

[1] Martyn's Christian India.

[2] See the Sermon of Sattianaden, published by the Society in 1792.

[3] Society's Report for 1812, p. 183.

from the respectable missionary, Dr. John, that his schools are crowded by children of both sexes, who are eager to receive the rudiments of useful learning: the prejudices of their parents, with regard to religion, are, indeed, still awake; but to the removal even of these the introduction of European knowledge is a most important step. Neither do these prejudices appear to operate against all our sacred books: the Psalms especially are learnt with avidity and repeated with delight. [1]

A further circumstance, which will probably lead to the happiest consequences, is the progress which has lately been made in Hindu literature. There are two distinct views, in which the benefit presents itself to our observation: it promises to furnish us with the means of proving to the unconverted Hindu how widely his practice differs from the precepts even of his own religion; and it will enable us to show him how much of the genuine doctrines of his religion is but a corruption of Divine truth as contained in the volume of the Christian Scriptures. With regard to the former of these points, it is now well known, that the enormities practised by the Hindus are wholly unauthorised, or but faintly countenanced, in their sacred writings: of which, however, a profound ignorance has generally prevailed. If of the four great castes only one is admitted to the reading of the Vedas, and another is permitted only to hear them read, while the other two, by far the most numerous, may have only the sastras or commentary read to them [2], it cannot be matter of just surprise, ever had the fountain been more pure, that the stream should have been exceedingly corrupted in its progress. But in truth even the Brahmins themselves seem not generally to have known the real doctrines of their religion, except from tradition; and it is a singular fact, that their reluctance to communicate the contents of their sacred books had never been overcome till within these few years. We are told, that the Emperor Akbar [3], in the plenitude of his power, could not obtain what is now freely granted to the curiosity of every British enquirer. Let us hope, that this surprising change of sentiment is destined to some important

[1] Dr. John's letter, lately published by Messrs. Rivington.
[2] Crawford's Sketches, vol. i. p. 129.
[3] Butler's Horæ Biblicæ, vol. ii. p. 167.

purpose. The advocate for Christianity will now be able to lay open the weakness of the Hindu superstition by shewing that its most exceptionable practices have not even the sanction of its own founders; that they are merely acts of will-worship; that they have originated in ignorance and error; and that they are utterly irreconcilable with that purer morality and those sublime conceptions of the Deity, which it cannot be denied that the Vedas occasionally develope. — But it is not the negative argument alone, which the Christian missionary is now enabled to employ: he will further observe, that much of what is really inculcated in the Hindu sacred books, bears a strong though disfigured resemblance to the leading doctrines of the Gospel. For some time it has been known that their most ancient writings maintain the unity of God in Three Persons; and various incarnations of these persons, especially of Vishnu or the second in the Triad, are believed to have taken place; but more recent inquiries have brought to light further and very important particulars respecting this subject. It appears that the expectation of some mighty deliverer prevailed long before the coming of Christ even among the Hindus. We are told, that in the Puranas, the earth complains of her being ready to sink beneath the accumulated iniquities of mankind; while Vishnu comforts her, promising to put an end to the tyranny of the demons: that for this purpose he would be incarnated; and the followers of Buddha unanimously declare, that this incarnation in the womb of a virgin, was predicted at least a thousand years before it came to pass.[1] The Hindus maintain, that these prophecies were fulfilled in the person of Crishna, in like manner as many of the Samaritans, to elude the prophecies respecting Christ, explained them of Joshua.[2] It may reasonably be hoped, that as the genuine doctrines and traditions of Hinduism shall be more fully ascertained, they will furnish positive and direct arguments, by which the Hindus may be brought to know the only true God, and Jesus, whom he hath sent.

Neither should you despair that the great stumbling-block in the way of conversion, the irregular lives of many of our own countrymen in the East, even if it still exist, may be speedily

[1] Asiat. Researches, vol. x. p. 27. [2] Ibid. p. 34.

removed. Already, indeed, if we may trust to the evidence of persons who have recently returned from India, the manners and conduct of our countrymen in that quarter have undergone considerable improvement: and such a result was to be expected from the provision now made for the education of the youth destined to fill important stations in the service of the government. The cause of religion is, it is true, still unsupported by public authority: but even for this radical defect the remedy, we trust, is at hand; the attention of the legislature having lately been called, in a manner which can scarcely be ineffectual to the establishment of an English episcopal church in India. Without it, indeed, the labours of missionaries cannot operate on a very extended scale: and the want of it is so urgent that it cannot, consistently with our Christian character or national honour, be much longer deferred. The church of Rome has her ecclesiastical establishment in various parts of India, and even in one of our own presidencies.[1] Her influence, however, is said to be on the decline: the funds of the propagandists were destroyed by the French devastations in Italy[2]; and we are assured that genuine Christianity is now more acceptable to the natives, than the spurious and corrupted doctrines of Rome. The Mohammedans still form a considerable part of the population of Hindostan: the Moslem conquerors did not fail to establish their religion wherever they consolidated their power: but their power in India is completely extinguished by the subjugation of the Mysore. The Hindoo Rajahs of Tanjore, though they never have been converted, have evinced a more than tolerant spirit towards the members of our mission. Several years have now elapsed since one of them appropriated a yearly revenue to the support of the Christian missionaries within his dominions[3]: and the homage more recently paid by the Rajah to the venerable Schwartz, when, at the funeral of that apostolic man, he wept over the bier of him whom he denominated his father and his friend, demonstrates that in the sight of even prejudice itself, "beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." Of these propitious circumstances whether

[1] Bombay. See Buchanan's Memoirs, p. 5.
[2] Tennant's Thoughts on India, p. 208.
[3] Society's Report for 1788.

or not our Christian country shall take immediate advantage, by establishing the church of England in the East, they will not at least be lost upon you. Whatever be the difficulties which you may have to surmount, you will at least reflect that they are inconsiderable, compared with those which your early predecessors in the same career cheerfully encountered, and in great measure overcame. When they first visited the shores of India, the name and office of the protestant missionary were as yet unknown; he was viewed with suspicion rather than welcomed with confidence; his Romanist rivals were active in prejudicing the natives against him[1]; there was not a single printing-press in that quarter of India; and the Scriptures were as yet wholly untranslated into the Tamul tongue: but the labours and learning of Ziegenbalg, snatched away as he was in the flower of his age, produced the Tamul Bible; and happily for the interests of the Christian cause, his companions and successors in the mission have, for the most part, been men of the same unwearied zeal and examplary deportment. With the labours of Ziegenbalg those of Plutscho and Grundler are still associated in tradition; the virtues of Schwartz and Gericke are still had in affectionate remembrance; and we trust, that by the blessing of God, the name of JACOBI may not be forgotten by those who shall hereafter trace the progress of the Gospel in Southern India.

That your pious purpose may be fully accomplished, and that your labours of love may be rewarded with abundant fruits, permit me in conclusion to offer you a few suggestions, which your future experience will correct or improve, but which, in the interval, it may not be wholly useless to revolve in your mind. It is obvious that your enterprise will require you to pursue a course of study, in which it cannot be expected that you should yet have made any great advances. The field of knowledge which the East throws open to an ardent and excursive mind, is so delightful, that care must be taken to restrain curiosity within the bounds of usefulness. Without the languages of the country in which you shall reside, you would be but as a barbarian unto the people, and they barbarians unto you. These languages are principally the Tamul and the Portuguese: many other dialects

[1] Niecampii Hist. Missionis, p. 106.

are partially spoken, but you will perhaps find it useful, without loss of time, to direct your attention to these, and even to make them in some degree vernacular, before you shall attempt other languages, if you shall attempt them at all. You will consider, that it is not merely in preaching to the natives what you shall have premeditated that your usefulness will consist, you will find it necessary to converse with them familiarly on every subject which may present itself; to enter into their sentiments, feelings, associations, and prejudices; and to be altogether such as they are, except only in their ignorance, their superstitions, and their vices; but this cannot be attained by a knowledge merely of words and phrases suited to a topic which we ourselves have chosen, but it supposes us to be able to *think*, as it were, in their language, if it be possible for foreigners to attain so nearly to perfection. Every idiom, perhaps, if we accurately examine it, is distinguished as much by the peculiar turn of sentiment to which it is accommodated, as it is by its grammatical structure; and this remark is true more especially of the Oriental tongues, the images and combinations of which have had their origin in habits of life and modes of thinking so widely differing from our own. Your other studies will probably be such as are immediately or collaterally connected with the objects of your mission. You will endeavour to acquire an intimate acquaintance with the prevailing tenets of Hinduism, with the arguments by which they are defended, and with the reasoning by which they may be refuted. You will cultivate those branches of knowledge which you find to be popular and likely to recommend you to the natives. You will diligently review the records of the mission and the labours of your forerunners, considering well to what causes their success has been chiefly attributable, and to what their failure, and resolving to profit by their experience whilst you emulate the bright example of their virtues. Above all, you will make the Sacred Volume your meditation by day and by night; both as it will enable you to establish Divine truth in the hearts of your hearers, and (which is indispensable to that great end) to preserve it pure and vigorous in your own.

To knowledge and learning you will add discretion. You are doubtless animated with the noblest zeal for the salvation of souls: I would not damp the sacred fire which is kindled

in your bosom by the Blessed Spirit: I trust it will be extinguished only with your latest breath. Let your zeal, however, be so regulated that it fail not of its object: attend to times and seasons and opportunities: a degree of jealousy, fatal to your views, might be excited by your imprudent interference with an inveterate superstition. But it is not merely in officiousness and temerity that zeal may err: it appears in a still more reprehensible form when it has ceased to be ingenuous. Beware then of holding out delusive representations to those who may be disposed to listen to you: avoid every thing which may be construed into a subterfuge or suppression of the truth: inculcate the doctrine of a crucified as well as of a glorified Redeemer: exhibit the Man of Sorrows in his meekness and lowliness: point out the necessity of an offering for sin; and let your endeavour be less to make a multitude of pretended proselytes, than that they, who shall profess the faith of Christ, shall profess it in truth and sincerity. It is admitted, I think, by all who have preceded you, that your hopes of making genuine converts must rest, in great measure, upon the instruction and education of youth. In this department much has been done to lessen your labour by a distinguished member of our society, who has greatly improved the method, which he brought from Madras, by giving it a more systematic arrangement and a more extensive application. You will not fail to avail yourself of this powerful aid: in conveying the elements of European knowledge, you will insensibly prepare the way to the adoption of our religious tenets; and these you will avowedly and strenuously inculcate, wherever it can be done without violating your good faith with the parents of the children committed to your care.

Finally, let me remind you, that under the guidance of the Blessed Spirit you must ultimately rely for your success on those Christian graces which are the proper fruits of the Spirit; they must live in your life, and breathe in all your actions: humility, patience, kindness, devotion, charity, and peace are the virtues of the Christian apostle: by these you will adorn and recommend the doctrine of God your Saviour. That the Almighty may accord to you these assistances, and whatever else may further the work to which He hath visibly called you, that He may make you the instrument of good to thousands, and through those whom you shall instruct, bring

tens of thousands from the power of Satan unto Himself, is our most fervent prayer. We shall take a lively interest in all your proceedings: we shall be thankful to God for all your successes: we shall rejoice in your joy. For the present, accept this our cordial greeting and farewell; and may the God of love and peace be with you evermore.[1]

[1] To this charge Mr. Jacobi made the following reply: —

The indulgence of this respectable meeting will, I trust, lend a patient ear to the accent of a foreigner, who deeply regrets his not being able to speak well the language of a nation for which he has the highest esteem. It is a long time since a meeting of this venerable society has been held on an occasion like the present, and I feel a peculiar pleasure in beholding such a number of venerable and respected characters now assembled for the purpose of again sending a missionary into a field where labourers indeed are wanting; and it is to be pitied, that it has been hitherto impossible to supply this want more plentifully. The reason of this lies not so much in the interrupted intercourse with the continent, as in the actual want of proper subjects for such stations. The pestilence of French principles, unbelief, confusion, and wisdom falsely so called, has also infected the German universities; and even with the better part of the students it has such an influence, as to make their spirits ill disposed to forsake all earthly pursuits, and to sacrifice every thing for the cause of true Christianity. The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and especially its excellent German agent, the celebrated Dr. Knapp, in Halle, has therefore used the utmost caution in the selection of missionaries; acting on the principle, that it is better to send none at all than bad subjects. Owing to the above-mentioned bad principles, and the distressed situation of my unfortunate country, the missionary spirit has much subsided, so that even on a proclamation of one of the most learned and eminent men to the students of divinity in all German universities, to offer themselves for the East India mission, not one appeared.

I think myself indeed highly favoured to be the first, after so long a time, who is sent out by this venerable society, whose missionaries, with *Schwartz* and *Gericke* at their head, have experienced peculiar blessings of the Lord in seeing their labours crowned with such abundant success, that it may be said of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, their missionaries have done more than those of all the other societies together. And yet this society is far from coveting the applause of men, but chooses rather to be known hereafter by its fruits, than to be praised by the present generation for great things yet to be undertaken. There is no doubt but it must be both an honour and a blessing to labour under the protection of such a society.

I think it now my duty to give some account of my life, together with the motives that induced me to deliver myself, with body and soul, up to this particular work of God.

When a boy of seven years my father, one of the most learned and pious ministers of the church of Saxony, telling me something about this country, said, "Behold, God has certainly yet great designs with England, and it is a mighty instrument in His hands to establish His kingdom on earth." He then telling me of the missions, I felt so deeply touched that I cried out, "Father, I will one day go to England, from thence to be sent out among the Gentiles;" and from that time all my thoughts were filled with this design. Childish as this might appear, my father kept these words in his heart; and when I afterwards had been four years at the college, and the hour of his death approached, he wrote me, that I might tell him, before he died, what my resolution about my future state of life was. I answered, that I was determined, if it pleased the Lord, to follow what I thought my calling to the mission. I was then sixteen years of age. My father, answering to this, exhorted me to look carefully on the ways of God with me, not to presume to guide my own fate; but as he had no objection

to my determination, he wished me the blessing of God to it. Alas! this was his last letter; the last words of which were, "May the Lord finish his work." He soon after died, and thus took my promise to be a missionary with him before the heavenly throne.

When eighteen years of age I left college for the university at Leipsic, where I studied two years upon my own fortune. Here many temptations assaulted me from all quarters: the allurements of sensual pleasure were easily overcome; but a more formidable enemy, the modern Divinity (if I may so term it), had very nigh caused my foot to slip in the path of faith. The lectures of the professors represented the Bible as a mere human book: in a word, infidelity was recommended, and preached from the pulpit designed for the preaching of faith. I had a hard contest, but it pleased God to establish my heart again, and to open my eyes more fully upon the wonders of his word. I then burnt all my manuscripts of the new method of divinity, and visited these lectures no more: I retired, and gave myself entirely to private study. Another temptation then arose to make me an apostate to the Lutheran church; but after having closely examined the doctrines of the party that wanted to make me a proselyte, I thanked God that I had not left my church; and I am very happy to understand that the church of England considers the Lutheran church as a faithful sister. By the particular providence of God I became acquainted with the Rev. Dr. Knapp, who invited me, by letter, to come to him, and to finish my studies in Halle. I accordingly left Leipsic, and Dr. Knapp showed me the kindness to take me into his own house. This last year in Halle every thing seemed to conspire to deter me from my design to become a missionary: many lucrative livings were offered to me in Saxony, Austria, and Russia; my own friends and relations began to urge me to accept such comfortable situations; they represented my intention to go on a mission as fantastical, and my reliance on God in this point as a chimera. At last it had the appearance, on account of the present war, as if my hope should never be realized, and my enemies, and those that scoffed at me, began already to triumph, when all at once, and unexpectedly, I received the call of this blessed society; and from the very moment I accepted it, till the present, the Lord has been with me in a peculiar manner in so many respects, that I clearly see it is His good pleasure, and firmly trust in Him that I shall safely arrive at the place of my destination in India.

Before I conclude, I beg the venerable and respected society kindly to accept my most hearty thanks for the kind reception I have met with, the attention shown to me, the care which has been taken to make my sojourning here, as well as my passage over the ocean comfortable. May the Lord reward the society for all this, by guiding me safely to my destination, by sending down His Spirit upon me, that I may be enabled soon to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation in Christ Jesus unto those that sit in darkness and under the shadow of death; and cause them to bless a society that thus took pity upon the poor benighted Gentiles. Yea, there are already crowns of thousands of saints, once Gentiles, prepared for those happy members of this society that have gone asleep in the Lord! and may I be privileged to prepare a crown for those that now send me off, and accompany me with their prayers! I promise to prove a faithful servant in the cause of the mission, to continue instant in praying for the grace of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to adorn His doctrine by my whole life and conversation, to endeavour to have always a good conscience both towards God and men. I depart with the prayer, that the Lord may vouchsafe to look down with his pleasure upon this venerable society, and to cause the same to remain for ever blessing and for ever blest.

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE

OF

CALCUTTA,

AT

Calcutta the 7th December 1815, *at Madras the 11th January, and at Bombay the 13th June* 1816;

AT

THE PRIMARY VISITATION,

By T. F. MIDDLETON, D. D. F. R. S.

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

Ἐκτὸν ὑφ᾽ ἡμᾶς τελούντων περιγένωμεθα, μὴ δυνάμεθα πως τὸ πολίαρχον ἐκεῖνο καὶ ὑψαύχενον ἔθνος ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων ἐθίμων ἀποστῆσαι δυνησόμεθα;

PETRUS ANTIOCHENUS ORIENTIS PATRIARCHA, apud *Cotclerii Mon. Eccl. Græcæ*, vol. ii. p. 157.

TO

THE REVEREND

THE CLERGY

OF

THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED IN BRITISH INDIA.

THE FOLLOWING CHARGE

IS, WITH GREAT REGARD, INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE

FRIEND AND BROTHER,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

Bombay,
24th June, 1816.

A

CHARGE, &c.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE occasion of your being now assembled is not unimportant in the annals of the Christian Faith. The day has at length arrived, when the purest and most powerful of protestant churches is completely established in a vast region of Asia; her clergy, hitherto a small number of detached individuals, acting without concert, and not subject to any local superintendence, are henceforward members of a compacted body, and united under the regimen, which every where prevailed in the primitive ages of the Gospel: from the first planting of Christian churches by the preaching of the apostles, till we reach the period of modern innovation or neglect, wherever there were Christians, there were clergy to instruct them; and wherever there were clergy, a bishop was placed among them, to advise, to encourage, to admonish, to preserve unity of faith and worship, and to perpetuate a holy priesthood. It is superfluous to inquire to what causes we should impute, in the present instance, the delay of a measure so consonant with Christian practice and of such obvious utility: our immediate concern will be rather to consider, now that the deficiency no longer subsists, in what way we may give effect to the important purposes, which the legislature contemplated, when it made provision for an episcopal establishment in British India.

I am fully aware, that in proceeding to the consideration of these points, I am entering upon a subject of no common difficulty: I am deeply sensible of the difference, which subsists between the condition of Christianity in these regions, and the order and stability, which it has long attained in England: I am ready to admit, that the duties of the clergy

are here to be performed in circumstances somewhat peculiar; that the public feeling is to be considered and conciliated; and that the suggestions of Christian prudence no where require to be observed with stricter care: but the inferences, which arise from this state of things, must be drawn with discrimination, or they will lead to consequences, which instead of removing our difficulties, could only tend to increase them. You are not to infer, where an object is definite, and legitimate, and accompanied, as we cannot doubt, with God's blessing, that impediments, however formidable in the outset, can in their nature be permanent: it would be wrong to infer, that schemes of improvement are not to be prosecuted with ardour, because hitherto they have been scarcely thought of, or under every disadvantage have failed; and admitting the existence of difficulties to the utmost extent, I will venture to remind you, that the just conclusion is the necessity of a ready and conscientious co-operation under one head; upon whom, after all, (and I feel it to be no light responsibility,) the blame of failure must principally rest. And when we recollect, that those who have been most forward to allege the peculiar circumstances of this country as arguments against improvement, have usually been persons not remarkable for their attachment to the Christian cause, I trust that the last to insist upon impediments, and to shelter themselves behind anomalies, will be the English clergy. We have no natural impediments to contend against, but the manners and habits incidental to an enervating climate: and yet there is no region on the earth, where the religion of Jesus, if due care be taken to plant and to water it, will not flourish. The most dissipated city of the East became one of the earliest and most distinguished seats of the Gospel. We know that "the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch;"[1] and that a branch of the church of Antioch has subsisted for centuries, under every discouragement, amidst the mountains of Malabar.

An unavoidable delay in the promulgation, by the supreme government, of His Majesty letters patent, has induced me to postpone, for so long a period, the exercise of certain powers vested in the bishop, and especially the very important

[1] Acts xi. 26.

measure of licensing my clergy. The new system, however, is now in full force; and I am enabled to inform you, in what light you are henceforward to consider yourselves, as well as to afford you a sketch of some particular obligations.

I wish that I could announce to you, that you were in all respects placed upon the footing of parochial incumbents; that each of you was to have his parish church, to which he was to be regularly instituted and inducted, and that he was to be assisted in the superintendence of his flock by churchwardens and overseers, as the parochial clergy are in England. In time, no doubt, beneficial changes will be gradually introduced: for the present, however, you are required to make the best of the circumstances in which you are actually placed; and they are such as to justify the expectation of your discharging the duties of clergymen with a high degree of usefulness and effect. You are many of you still, by the nature of your duties, military chaplains; but by no means subject to all the inconveniences, which the name seems to imply. You are placed completely and exclusively under ecclesiastical jurisdiction: you have fixed and permanent stations, to which you are henceforward to be nominated by myself; and your correspondence on all ecclesiastical matters will be carried on with myself or my archdeacons: the rules prescribed for the regulation of your conduct will be precisely the same, except where local circumstances render it impracticable, with those which subsist at home: my letters patent direct me to administer the ecclesiastical laws, as they are received in the realm of England: and they evidently contemplate no other discipline, than that under which our church has been favoured with such manifestations of the divine blessing, and still continues, notwithstanding the cavils of bigoted or ignorant men, to be the great depositary of scriptural knowledge and sacred truth, and, under Christ, the main support of Christian piety throughout the world.

It is needless, I trust, in any circumstances, to employ much time in reminding Clergymen of the obligations which they contracted, when they solemnly devoted themselves to their holy calling; to bring to their recollection, that they promised, by the help of God, to "give faithful diligence always so to minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this

church and realm hath received the same:"[1] and that "in the public worship of God they will use the form prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, and none other:"[2] an engagement, which precludes addition, and omission, and every alteration whatever. And yet, perhaps, in the peculiar circumstances attending the situation of the clergy in this country, one great danger, to which they have been exposed, has been that of falling into habitual neglect of canonical regularity: some practices of this kind have, in truth, come to my knowledge, of which, in the reliance that they will not be persisted in, I would much rather suggest the excuse, than pronounce the censure. I am ready to admit, that the clergy have hitherto been placed in a condition by no means favourable to the correct and regular performance of their duties. It is doubtless a high advantage enjoyed by your brethren in England, that their attention is so frequently drawn to every topic connected with their profession. Episcopal and archidiaconal visitations afford the means of instruction and advice, as well as of a ready and frequent intercourse among the clergy of the same district: the example of an incumbent of revered character and approved judgment silently yet powerfully operates on his younger brethren, who are placed in his immediate neighbourhood: and occasionally, the penalties inflicted on the grosser derelictions of duty, and sometimes even on the omission of forms, will not suffer any to fall into a general inattention to subjects of this nature. In the utter absence of these helps and restraints, it cannot be matter of surprise, if uncanonical practices have sometimes been admitted; especially in a country, where the laity themselves, little conversant with such subjects, have not exacted from the clergy the same attention to established order, which is generally expected at home. These considerations seem to demand, especially at this our first meeting, that I should somewhat enlarge upon the topic of discipline.

The age in which we live, is not generally chargeable with any want of zeal in behalf of religion. The value of Christianity is felt and acknowledged by the great mass of Christians; and very praiseworthy efforts are made for its diffusion. Much, however, of this zeal is destitute of regu-

[1] Ordination of priests. [2] 36th Canon.

lation, or is directed only by the private views and notions of those, by whom it is cherished; and while those notions are so discordant, and are sometimes inculcated with so little regard to any recognised authority, it is to be expected, that the obligation to order in religious proceedings should be little attended to, and, in consequence, not generally understood: there seems even to be a prejudice against it, as if it were injurious to zeal, by having a tendency to cramp its exertions and to narrow the range of piety. It may be supposed, that an order of men, who have voluntarily adopted the sober views of the church of England, and who know the grounds on which her discipline is established, and have had experience of its use and necessity, will be little liable, on such a subject, to be affected by the fluctuating opinions of the day; and yet, perhaps, it is too much to hope, that any of us, especially in such circumstances, should be wholly exempt from the influence of prevailing sentiment: human nature is too weak to adhere invariably and inflexibly to principles, which, however solemnly adopted and powerfully established, are yet disparaged in the public estimation, and not always observed in practice. I would remind you, then, that the order and discipline of our church are an integral part of its constitution, considering it as an instrument in the hands of God for the maintenance and diffusion of truth. The inculcation of sound doctrine is perceived by the most superficial, to be the highest object and aim of religious instruction; but it is not always remembered, that sound teaching can be maintained only by salutary discipline; and that the unity of truth must be preserved by a reference to some particular interpretation of Scripture. Neither can provision be generally made for the maintenance of religion, but through the aid of an ecclesiastical polity; not necessarily, indeed, enjoying the sanction and protection of the state, but sufficiently strong to maintain and enforce its regulations against opposition: which, however, in the present condition of society, is scarcely supposable to any great extent, without the assistance of the temporal power. And such appears to be the actual constitution of the church of England. Its government and discipline originally emanate from higher authority than any human enactments, or the power of princes; even from the word of God, and the promises of Christ, and the practice of his

apostles: its liturgy and its articles, though of human composition, are yet interpretations of Scripture by persons, to whom was committed the ministry of the word: and the rubric, which it has framed to preserve a decency and propriety of worship, and the canons, by which it has provided for its government, are the results of piety and experience applied to these particular subjects: the part which the state has taken in these proceedings, has been only to adopt and to sanction them, and to secure to the clergy, who teach in conformity with such principles, the emoluments, which a Christian state will appropriate to the maintenance of the Gospel, together with certain immunities and honours, to uphold them in the eyes of the world.

If this statement, then, be just, nothing can be more unfounded than any prejudice against the order and discipline of our church, as tending to interfere with a salutary zeal; I mean, supposing such prejudice to subsist among many of its members. With respect to others, the case is more intelligible, though it hardly deserves our notice: it is natural for those, who have no idea of sacred truth beyond the narrow views of the sect or party, with which they happen to be connected, to cherish a hope, that if the established interpretation of scripture were divested of authority, and order and system could be brought into disrepute, their opinions would meet with less opposition: but with such we have at present no concern. For us it is sufficient to be convinced, that all the undoubted verities of Scripture are maintained and inculcated by our church; that it furnishes the most ample means of grace, and well-founded hopes of glory; that its rites are primitive, and decent, and edifying; and that it imposes no restraints on zeal, but such as are necessary to order and peace, and to the maintenance of that establishment, under which the purposes of genuine piety are most easily attainable. and if any occasional inconvenience seems to result from the operation of the rules, which it has prescribed, it will be right to consider, though I cannot imagine a case, in which the inconvenience can be shewn, that in this, as in other instances, particular must give way to general good.

But in considering the unreasonableness of the prejudices against ecclesiastical discipline, it were unjust to rest its defence upon abstract principles, or even upon the constitution

of the church of England. The primitive church, if we may rely upon the records of its earliest proceedings, was not more remarkable for the zeal and intrepidity of its preachers, than for their strict conformity to order, and their care to inculcate respect for discipline on the minds of their converts. To imagine that the first Christians bore any resemblance to the wild fanatics, who act as if it were a mark of piety to "despise dominion and to speak evil of dignities,"[1] would indicate an utter ignorance of the history of our religion. It is well known, that the order and discipline, the foundation of which had been laid by the apostles, was a subject of unremitted attention in their immediate successors. Not only is this apparent from the writings of the apostolical fathers, but still more so, if possible, from the history of the early councils, and the care to provide for every emergency in the government of the rising church. Many of the canons decreed at these councils refer to doctrine, and scarcely fewer to discipline: and though it is admitted, that the work which has come down to us, under the name of "apostolical canons," did not actually proceed from the apostles, it has been shewn to be of an antiquity little posterior to the apostolic age, and in the judgment of Bishop Beveridge has merited the appellation of "the Code of the Primitive Church."[2] The truth appears to be, that the zeal of the early Christians went hand in hand with order and submission to authority; and whatever may be alleged of the influence and splendour, which the church acquired by the conversion of Constantine, it is certain that the jurisdiction of the hierarchy had been fully recognised from the earliest times; and that the great body of Christians evinced a conscientious obedience to laws enforced under no other penalty than that of spiritual excommunication, and deriving no support from the state.

It is difficult, however, to speak or to think on the present subject, in this quarter of the globe, without connecting it in some degree with the possible extension of the Gospel. We are aware, indeed, that this is a topic from the mere mention of which some persons shrink with alarm: and unquestionably, if we could be supposed to cherish the thought of propagating

[1] Jude 8. [2] Vide Cotelerii Patres Apostolicos, vol. i. p. 432.

religion by force, not only ought the subject to be proscribed by common consent, but the idea should be rejected with horror. We bless God, however, that persecution on account of religion is alike abhorrent from the faith of Protestants and the temper of the times: the only armour of an offensive kind in the Christian panoply is "the sword of "the Spirit, which is the word of God." [1] But if, in the general dissemination of knowledge, the excellence of Christianity should be more fully displayed; — if a faithful and affectionate exhibition of the truth, as it is in Christ Jesus, should impress the minds of some, who cannot discover either the grounds of their present faith, or the reasonableness of their worship; — or if a strict attention to divine ordinances and to Christian duties among ourselves should produce the effects, which so abundantly followed it in the early stages of the Gospel, and should bring in willing converts to Christ, I know not that "any man can forbid water, that these should not be baptized." [2] And the prophetic word enjoins us to look to such an event, though it has not defined the precise mode or the time of its accomplishment. In this view, then, the church in India may be only in its infant state: it may be destined to receive gradual yet continual accessions of strength; and it may ultimately, in the unseen methods of Providence, be made the means of dispensing knowledge and consolation to the descendants of millions, who are yet without its pale: "the kingdom of God," as we are assured, cometh not with observation" [3] or "outward shew." [4] With reference, therefore, to such a consummation, however remote, the attention will be naturally directed to the church establishment, as the centre from which the whole body of converts must derive its unity and consistency. In every supposable state of society, except in a temporary coalition of adverse and discordant prejudices, where the object is political power, the religion which is established by authority, will maintain its just preponderance: and that preponderance, in the present case, while it will be seen to be in favour of a discipline derived from the primitive ages, and having therefore the sanction of antiquity, would also be found to be most congenial with the habits and the character of the people. It may,

[1] Ephes. vi. 17. [2] Acts x. 47. [3] Luke xvii. 20. [4] Marginal reading.

therefore, be reasonably expected, that the government of the future church, whatever be its extent, should be that which was in force at the time of its foundation; or in other words, should be episcopal: that the decent and dignified order of our establishment should be the model, which Christian congregations would adopt; and that from whatever quarter the tidings of the Gospel may first have come, and however imperfectly or partially conveyed, all diversity of practice or opinion should gradually subside in the doctrine and the discipline of the church. A small society of Christians, may, indeed, be formed upon almost any of the various schemes which caprice may suggest; and such societies may be preserved from dissolution, so long as an establishment diverts the jealousy of rival sects: but nothing which has any resemblance to independency is adapted to the maintenance of religion amongst a numerous people, and least of all perhaps, when we consider their peculiar character amongst the nations of the East. Abstract theories of religious liberty would be hardly intelligible, where no real or supposed right was felt to be infringed: and the unbiassed judgment would declare for Christianty in that form, in which the fullest provision should be made for piety, and order, and peace.

In offering you, however, these remarks, I am duly mindful that I am not addressing missionaries, but the stationary ministers of an established church. I might, indeed by reverting to an act of the legislature in the reign of King William, recognise the two characters in union: it was then enjoined, that "such ministers, as should be sent to reside in India, should apply themselves to learn the native language of the country, the better to enable them to instruct the Gentoos, who should be servants of the company or of their agents in the Protestant religion:[1] and among the missionary proceedings of the present day I have met with none, which have been conducted with a happier combination of zeal and judgment, than one of your own body has displayed.[2] It were perhaps to be wished, for various reasons, that missionary efforts had been exerted principally in the same channel: it should seem to be easier to add converts to an established congregation, than to form one where none

[1] Charter of the East India Company, A. D. 1698.
[2] The Rev. Mr. Corrie, of Agra.

existed: and on the ground of unity the advantage is so manifest, that it were needless to insist on it. But this system seems to have been only partially acted upon; and though, I believe, it has not been formally abolished, a very different one has grown up in its place. My object, however, in this part of my address to you, has been, not so much to revive it, especially as you have more immediate and peculiar duties, as to enforce an attention to discipline, with reference to an eventual extension of Christianity, by whatever means and whenever it may be accomplished. Every consideration, which can be urged in behalf of our national church, clearly supposes it to be well administered, and that the clergy, each in his station, be observed to discharge their allotted duties with regularity and regard to system. We otherwise become unconnected individuals, and cannot possess in the public estimation any advantage arising from our peculiar fitness to form a general standard. Even with a view to our making converts by the mere force of example, the effect of such regularity can hardly fail to be felt. In the early ages, unbelievers, in endeavouring to account for the rapid progress of the Gospel, laid great stress on the regularity and order of the clergy; and Sozomen [1] has preserved to us a remarkable letter of Julian the apostate to the high priest of Galatia, in which he urges the priest to engraft on paganism the laws and usages, by the observance of which the Christian clergy had been so successful. But in the lowest view of the subject, and supposing that in the plan of providence other means should be chiefly effectual in disseminating the truth, if the doctrines of our church are ultimately to be received as the preferable interpretation of scripture, they must be diligently and consistently inculcated; and if her discipline is to be the model, it must be exhibited in all its strength. This is our proper 'vantage-ground: and if we are verily persuaded, that the purest principles of the Christian faith are those which we are pledged to maintain, and that our church is really built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, we shall not abandon our ground by remissness, by irregularity, or by specious attempts at accommodation.

[1] Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 16.

In the course of my connexion with you, if providence should spare my life, I shall endeavour to keep in view the general principles here laid down, and apply them to circumstances, as these may arise. For the present, under this head, I will content myself with urging you to a strict conformity with the rubric and the canons of our church: they have the same force in India that they have in England: and they are equally to be observed, wherever they are not plainly inapplicable: of which I shall be enabled to judge. Your dress, minute as the subject may seem, is by no means to be disregarded; and I am not aware that even the climate can require us to divest ourselves of any of the external marks of our profession: where, indeed, the clergy are so few, it is more especially necessary, that they should be distinguishable, and should maintain respect. The same remark will apply to every feature of your deportment and conversation: and in truth, whenever I consider these points, I am convinced, that the responsibility which attaches to your situation, is even, if possible, greater than that which belongs to incumbents in England. The ministers of the Gospel are every where ordained to be lights in the world; but here, in a world of thick darkness: and if any of you hide is light, there is no one at hand to supply his place, or to keep alive the sacred fire of divine truth in a region of wide extent; the charge is committed to a single individual, on whose fidelity and vigilance every thing must depend. Under the same head of admonition, I would remind you of the propriety, wherever there are churches, of using them in the performance of such offices, as the rubric does not authorise in any other place. The practice which has been admitted in some instances, of performing the marriage service at all hours of the day, and in private houses, even where a church is within a convenient distance, I cannot sanction or allow: and even where there is no church, the decency and solemnity, which have prescribed certain hours for the purpose are quite as deserving of regard in this country as in any part of the world. So likewise in the administration of the office of baptism, the attendance of sponsors is to be required in the manner which the rubric directs: it is a salutary institution, both with respect to the provision, which it makes, for bringing up children in the nurture of the Lord, and as it tends to

connect individuals, who are not joined by any necessary tie, in the bonds of Christian love. There are, probably, other topics of this kind, which may deserve notice: but what has been said will, I trust, be sufficient to convey my notions generally, as well as to shew the stress, which I lay on the specified particulars.

I will conclude the present head with observing, that the subject of discipline to a certain degree, involves the laity as well as the clergy; who, though they are not compellable to act in defiance of their obligations, and at the hazard of censure, will be naturally anxious to conciliate their flocks, and to gain them over to a cheerful compliance with order and propriety, if these in any instance have usually been violated. What, then, is the course which you will pursue? Evidently, I think, you will endeavour to explain the reasons and the fitness which have guided our church in all her proceedings: it may sometimes be requisite to do this from the pulpit: and I am persuaded that a temperate and discreet appeal to good sense and good principle, will never be made in vain. In your sermons the prevailing topics will be the grand truths of the everlasting Gospel: the method and the terms of human salvation: the natural weakness and insufficiency of man, unassisted by the blessing of God; — the alarming consequences of irreligion and indifference; — the obligation to adorn and recommend the doctrine of God our Saviour; — and in short, whatever has a tendency to give not only to your hearers, but to those "who are without [1]," "access through Christ by one spirit unto the Father." [2] But while you are advocates for the doctrines of Christianity and for holiness of life, I should not think it expedient to inculcate them in such a manner, as indirectly to countenance the neglect of any established ordinance: at home, such conduct would be highly prejudicial, and in this country it would be fatal, to the interests of the cause in which you have engaged. With respect to our own people, there can be but little danger, for the present, of their attributing too much to rites and forms in religion, where many of them for years together have never seen a clergyman: and with reference to the surrounding nations, visible ordinances are the only proofs that we entertain a reverence for God: nor can you

[1] Col. iv. 5. [2] Ephes. ii. 18.

require to be told, that it is to the too frequent absence of such ordinances, that we are to impute much of the prejudice, which subsists in this country against the Christian name. It appears to me, therefore, that you will but imperfectly discharge your duty, if you do not occasionally insist upon *externals*; not as superseding, or at all interfering with, the sanctity of the heart and the affections, and the worship of God in spirit and in truth, but as means conducing to an end, and without which in ordinary cases that end would not be attained.

From subjects connected with the general discipline and good order of our establishment, it is time that I should proceed to topics more immediately of a practical character, as relating to your ordinary duties: and these I cannot place in any point of view more interesting or more useful, than by bringing them into as near approximation as possible to the duties of parochial clergy. The model which I would propose to you, is that of the English parish priest; — the guardian of morals, — the instructor of youth, — the comforter of the afflicted, — the promoter and director of works of charity and love — and the guide of all, who are entrusted to his charge, in the way of peace: and I anticipate every objection arising from the different state of society and the circumstances of the country, in the reply, that this is still the standard, to which you should endeavour to make all difficulties gradually yield: as a general rule of conduct I cannot offer you any, which is so likely to carry you to the object, which I must suppose you to have in view, the religious and moral improvement of the people committed to your care. Without denying, that there are difficulties, arising in some measure from the fluctuating state of society, in some instances from a long disuse of religious habits and associations, and generally from your not possessing that prescriptive influence which attaches to the clergy, wherever they are numerous and have been long regarded as an order of the community; admitting these difficulties, I am still of opinion that you will not want encouragement in your endeavours to establish a pastoral influence, especially if it be attempted by your taking the lead in plans of benevolence and usefulness, which cannot any where originate so properly as with yourselves. That they should proceed from the laity, while a

clergyman is actually on the spot, is scarcely to be expected, however it may be desired; and from every thing which I can learn, your lot can hardly be cast, where you will not find a considerable portion of Christian zeal to co-operate with you in any laudable design. The habit of thinking, and still more of acting according to your views, may not, indeed, be already formed; but if the principle be in existence, you will only have to appeal to it, and to lead it to its proper object. These remarks, however, suppose you to be animated with a sincere desire of doing good: they suppose you to be attentive to the spiritual and temporal wants of your people; to be vigilant observers of every thing, which is amiss; and in short, to have your hearts in the work of your holy calling. And in truth, I can hardly imagine, in what manner clergymen, especially in situations remote from the presidencies, can pass their time, except in pursuits relating to their appointment. In every part of the world, a kind Providence has connected our happiness with our duty; but in no condition is the remark more just, than with respect to clergymen in India. Here I cannot suppose any medium between habitual attention to duty, and habits of indolence and voluptuousness. In England the case is different: there the clergy are induced to employ their leisure, and sometimes perhaps more than their leisure, from their proper duties, in various pursuits more or less honourable and useful, and worthy of active minds: they engage in the labours and cares of the magistracy; or they cultivate their own glebe: or literature has attractions which are here unknown: and happily for the country, the education of the youth of the higher and middle classes of the community, is almost exclusively in their hands. From all such engagements you are necessarily precluded; and this circumstance justifies the supposition, that here you can have no other pursuits, than the duties and the studies of your profession.

Among the objects, then, which fall under the head of *duties*, I would recommend to your particular attention the state of the military: who, indeed, in some instances constitute nearly the whole of your flocks. There cannot be a class of persons more in need of pastoral superintendence, and of instruction in the truths of our religion: too frequently, it is to be presumed, that the common soldiers were brought up in habits of profligacy, and still more frequently,

that whatever of good they learnt in their childhood, has been lost from long disuse. You cannot, then, be engaged in a more Christian object, than in seeking to reclaim them; in awakening them to a sense of their danger: in urging them to receive instruction; in visiting them in their sickness; and in dispensing to them the consolations of our holy faith. And scarcely, if at all, less valuable, will be your labours in the conduct of regimental schools: in which agreeably to the design of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the principles of the Church of England are to be inculcated on the plan of the National Society.[1] It is not to be expected that the masters of such schools should be always sufficiently acquainted with the system, to carry it on with the fullest effect; and in no case can it be supposed, that the superintendence of a resident clergyman, who interests himself in the good order and the religious improvement of the children, can be unavailing or superfluous. In the furtherance of these objects, and I will add, of almost every object, which I can imagine you to have at heart, I rejoice that you will henceforward be furnished with most effectual assistance. By the blessing of God, *a diocesan* and *two district committees* are already established, of *the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*; a society, which has been honourably known in India in one of its departments for more than a century, and will now I trust, be actively employed in disseminating Christian knowledge in the East among our own countrymen. The attention of the committees will especially be turned to the condition of the European soldiery in barracks and cantonments, and in short, wherever vice or ignorance is found to subsist among the British in India. I consider the want of such an institution to have been hitherto a great impediment to the success of your labours. Of bibles, notwithstanding the exertions of another society, there is not, I believe, any redundancy; prayer-books are exceedingly scarce: elementary tracts, such as you could properly use, have but rarely found their way to this country; approved books for the use of schools appear to be in great demand; expositions of the church catechism are not commonly met with; and instructions for those who are to be confirmed, may be imagined to

[1] General Orders, 1st. Jan. 1812.

be little known: but these, and in short every thing which can be useful in aid of pastoral instruction, will now be easily procurable. Of these committees, all the clergy, I believe, who have heard of their formation, are already members; and I should be negligent of my duty, if I did not suggest to you the propriety of recommending them to notice among all who value Christian knowledge, and who would promote it amongst their brethren in a foreign land.

To the subject of your *studies*, it might seem superfluous to advert: and yet with reference even to this particular, I cannot forbear to offer you one or two suggestions. The Christian clergy in the primitive ages were placed in circumstances not essentially different from your own: they were often the pastors of very small flocks surrounded by Pagans, with whom they were obliged to have frequent intercourse, and towards whom to observe the greatest circumspection: and many of the earlier canons and constitutions were framed expressly with a view to this state of things. You cannot suppose me to ascribe to them any authority, where they have not been adopted by our church; but as they were the dictates of primitive piety and of practical experience in situations often analogous to your own, I cannot but be of opinion that the study of them, as well as of the manners and habits of the first Christians, and especially of the clergy, may be recommended as an appropriate employment of your leisure. The *Christian Antiquities* of Bingham will alone supersede a multitude of volumes relating to the subject in question: as comprising a vast collection of facts respecting the early history of our religion, and calculated, on many accounts, to afford you valuable hints for the regulation of your conduct. Another study, which I would particularly recommend to you, is that of the evidences of Christianity. The flimsy scepticism, which prevailed in England some years since, among those who knew little of religion, except from cavils and objections, is, I have reason to apprehend, not wholly unknown in India: and it is possible that even a learned divine, whose studies have proceeded upon a conviction long since established, that the Gospel came from God, may not be always prepared to convince the gainsayer, or to meet a fallacy with all the force of truth. But it is not, perhaps, to the mischievous zeal of Deists in Europe, that we should ascribe all

the scepticism, the symptoms of which may be detected in India. There are circumstances attending a long residence in this country, which without any extrinsic aid must operate against a clear and decided belief of revelation. The total disuse of public worship, not unfrequently occasioned by necessity, might of itself be thought sufficient to create indifference: but when persons, who see little or nothing of their own religion, are almost daily spectators of the rites of superstition; — when they are told that it has descended with all its usages from the most remote antiquity; — when they observe that millions appear to believe in it, and rigidly adhere to its injunctions, and that these are generally regular in their lives and peaceable in their deportment; — when extravagant commendation is given to passages in their sacred books, as conveying no unworthy notions of the Creator; and when the mind is called to witness the various ways, in which men do homage to the Supreme Being; — in such circumstances, it certainly requires a deeper acquaintance with the true state of the question than is usually to be expected, to be proof against inferences which are formed almost imperceptibly, and which, we know, have sometimes led to opinions avowedly hostile to the exclusive claims of the Gospel. It is not considered, that antiquity is not even presumptive evidence of truth, besides that it is not peculiar to one mode of faith; — that millions may be kept in error, where knowledge is prescribed and forbidden; — that the peace of human societies is by no means the only, or the ultimate object of true religion, and that morals are not merely something negative, but are a positive and active compliance with the authenticated will of God; — that sublime conceptions of the Deity are attainable without inspiration, and that when they are blended with the absurd fancies of a disgusting mythology, it may well be suspected, that both have not been derived from a common source; — and that after all, the evidences of Christianity are peculiarly its own: I allude not merely to prophecies, nor to miracles, nor to the character and doctrines of Christ, nor to the moral effect produced on his apostles by His resurrection and by the Descent of the Holy Spirit: I mean that it is an historical religion: the history of the whole dispensation is before us, from the creation of the world to the present hour: and it is, throughout, consistent with itself

and with the attributes of God; gradually developing one vast design through a progression of ages, which makes it impossible that our faith can have been fabricated by the collusion of many, or by the artifice of a single impostor. Of its two competitors, the one has no history to produce, but in the place of it refers us to inscrutable antiquity; while of the other, all that can be told, lies within a narrow compass, and furnishes its best refutation.

You will not then be surprised that I recommend to your particular attention the study of the evidences of our faith. The writings of GROTIUS, of STILLINGFLEET, of LESLIE, of LARDNER, and of PALEY, contain, probably, the substance of all which has been written on the subject: you will, of course, store your memory with those reasonings especially which are most applicable to the circumstances; and it is not impossible that you may sometimes be led by local considerations to pursue very profitably, and to extend reflections on which those great writers were not required to dwell. These studies will be well rewarded if they enable you to reclaim one gainsayer, or in a single instance, to relieve the anxiety of ingenuous doubt; and this you may hope, with the blessing of God, will be the usual result. The evidences of Christianity are so various in their kind, so peculiar in their character, and so independent of each other, that, considering them merely as a combination of moral probabilities, they lead to a conclusion little short of mathematical certainty, and of which the parallel cannot be produced in behalf of any falsehood which has ever been imposed upon mankind.

I have detained you at this our first meeting somewhat longer, probably, than can ever be requisite hereafter; and yet I am aware that many important topics may still remain untouched. It is to be supposed, that in so vast a charge I am yet only commencing my inquiries; and in order to facilitate them, and to ascertain the precise points which especially demand my notice, I have directed that a *circular letter* should be sent to all of my clergy, desiring distinct answers to the several questions proposed, as the only method of becoming at once, in some degree, acquainted with the condition of a diocese, to the actual visitation of every part of which, within the compass of two or three years, no ordinary strength is equal. The result of these our joint endeavours, I trust, will

be the establishment of Christian order and piety wherever the principles of our faith are professed through the British empire in the East. Your numbers, indeed, are at present inadequate to the spiritual wants of the people; and I regret that in a country, where the professors of other modes of worship offer a visible homage to their Maker in the proudest monuments of native art, our Christian edifices are rarely such as to mark our zeal in the service of God, and are much fewer than the clergy. Still, however, you are required to make the best use of your present means: and so soon as I shall be enabled, from a full acquaintance with the state of my diocese, to represent its wants, it cannot be doubted that a Christian government will readily attend to the first of its Christian duties.

I now, my reverend brethren, dismiss you with my fervent prayer, that the succours of the Holy Spirit may be abundantly vouchsafed to all of us; that we may be actuated by a patient zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of human souls; and that we may each of us, in his allotted station, hourly and habitually remember the account which we must one day give at the judgment-seat of Christ. In the various allotments of human duty, by which Providence is pleased to make trial of man's obedience and love in this probationary state, I can hardly imagine any condition in which fidelity or neglect leads to consequences more momentous in time and in eternity. In that awful day, when these consequences shall attach to each of us, may we severally be invited to enter into the joy of our Lord.

TWO CHARGES

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY IN THE DIOCESE OF CALCUTTA:

THE FORMER

At Calcutta and Madras in February and March 1819, *and at Bombay and Colombo in March and April* 1821;

AND THE LATTER

At Calcutta in December 1821.

By T. F. MIDDLETON, D. D. F. R. S.
BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

TO

THE VENERABLE THE ARCHDEACONS,

AND

THE REVEREND THE CHAPLAINS,

IN THE

DIOCESE OF CALCUTTA,

THE FOLLOWING CHARGES

ARE INSCRIBED

BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE BROTHER

AND SERVANT,

T. F. CALCUTTA.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY

AT

CALCUTTA, MADRAS, BOMBAY, AND COLOMBO,

In 1819 and 1821.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

NOTWITHSTANDING that our attention may be presumed to be given, in a pre-eminent degree, to the immediate concerns of our calling, we cannot, as men of ordinary reflection, or even as observers of the ways of Providence, be wholly unmoved by the events passing in the world; especially in that part of it which the Almighty has been pleased to allot as the scene of our duties: we are required, indeed, in connection with those duties to discern, if possible, "the signs of the times;" a knowledge of which is not more important to the statesman or politician, than it is to the faithful and zealous servant of Jesus Christ. I cannot therefore have any scruple in the opening of this address, to remind you of the extended, if not new relation in which our country has been recently placed with respect to the nations of India. To the wisdom and energy by which British supremacy has been established over one of the fairest portions of Asia, or even to the enlightened and benevolent views which have illustrated the career of success, no tribute can here be paid but in the way of transient allusion; and it is, indeed, upon other grounds that I would turn your reflections to the subject: it is, that in the revolution of ages, no event has apparently been more propitious to the interests of the Gospel than the acquisition, by a Christian state, of the sovereignty of Hindoostan: I do not except the discovery of America; especially when I recollect how corrupt were the doctrines which were thus disseminated, and how unchristian the violence with which they were enforced. In any consequences, however, to be augured

from this source, I need hardly, I trust, with respect to you at least, disclaim the notion of any effect to be expected from the exercise of power: God forbid that the most zealous among us should look to any power, but "the power of God unto salvation."[1] Yet even in this, the only Christian view of the question, external circumstances have their weight; second causes are visibly instruments in the hands of God; and it is not presumptuous to believe, rather are we forbidden to doubt, that this unparalleled and unforeseen exaltation of the British name is directed to objects not within the ken of avarice or ambition. It is hardly conceivable, that among the millions of unbelievers now subjects of a Christian state, none should be led to the obvious reflection, "Surely, this great nation is a wise and understanding people."[2] Here, as elsewhere, it will be natural to ask, what are the proximate causes which have led to such stupendous results? it is not mere victory which prompts the question; it must be seen that the advantage of physical force is not on our side: our knowledge, our institutions, our habits of thinking, and our moral superiority must be perceived to enter largely into the theory of our progressive ascendancy, and they cannot fail to become subjects of closer investigation: and among a people to whom religion, at least in the abstract, presents questions of the highest interest, it is hardly to be supposed but that many will be anxious to ascertain what is the faith professed by such a nation, and what are the pretensions on which it rests. It were to disparage the faculties of a people not naturally dull, to imagine that they never analyse opinions and associations so widely differing from their own: and as little were it to do honour to the Gospel, to believe that a candid examination of it, assisted by the appointed means, will not, under the divine guidance, lead some to conviction, and ultimately to conversion. In such an enquiry they cannot advance far without discovering, that hitherto they "have believed in vain[3]:" the deformity and weakness of error may escape observation, while it engages the undivided attention of the human mind, but it cannot abide the test of a contrast with the beauty and consistency of truth.

I have not, however, offered you these remarks without an

[1] Rom. i. 16. [2] Deut. iv. 6. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 2.

especial reference to the proper business of our meeting. My wish is to impress you with a principle resulting from our national successes in this quarter of the globe: it is the increased and increasing responsibility of the English clergy. Without any extension of the cure assigned to each, fresh demands are made upon the ministers of religion in a heathen land, in proportion as the faith which they inculcate is from any cause likely to become an object of interest with the natives, and any opening appears to be offered by Providence for the diffusion of the Gospel. You will have formed a narrow estimate of your office, and have thought unworthily of that scheme of mercy, which you were ordained to preach, if any prospect of *moral* good to the people around you, to say nothing of *spiritual* blessings, excite in you no emotions of zeal, and serve not to remind you, that in such a work you are each of you called upon to bear a part. I cannot, in short, dissociate objects like these from the concerns of the established clergy.

Before I proceed, however, to call your attention to your share and interest in the work, I will remark upon the collateral means which are here employed for the diffusion of the Gospel, and from which, as being expressly intended for the purpose, success is more generally expected; I allude to Christian missions, a subject which it is becoming every day more difficult to detach from discussions like the present. It is certainly to the credit of our country, and of the age in which we live, that so much concern is felt for the condition of the heathen world; it is in fact peculiar to the religion of Christ to be influenced by a regard for the spiritual welfare of man: paganism has never thought of making converts, unless perhaps in the rivalry between contending sects; and Islamism appears not ever to have been actuated by any sentiment allied to sympathy, but merely to have been impelled by the zeal of conquest, and to have considered its proselytes as subjects and abettors of its power. That Christianity is secure against this imputation will be admitted by those, at least, who dread the extension of the Gospel, as tending to dissolve the ties of allegiance among a people who acknowledge our sway.

But allowing that missionary zeal among Christians may be generally imputed to the benign spirit of the Gospel, we

cannot observe, without feelings mingled with regret, that it is not always so regulated as to produce the highest degree of good; and what is passing before our eyes will furnish matter for reflection. To judge from the manner in which this subject is sometimes spoken of, we might imagine that the primitive ages had returned, and that little was wanting but the miraculous powers then vouchsafed, to further the successes of the Gospel: on looking, however, into the records of those ages, I cannot acquiesce in a conclusion so gratifying, if it were but just, to every Christian mind: on the contrary, I am convinced, that hardly any two things, which are ever supposed to have a close resemblance, are more dissimilar.

To any man who will take the trouble to ascertain this point, by examining the history of early Christianity, the remark will probably suggest itself, that he finds but little in the ecclesiastical historians which treats professedly and distinctly of its propagation; and that after the apostolic age, ecclesiastical history is rather that of churches already planted, and of the catholic church as a whole, than that of missions; but if, nevertheless, Christianity, as we know, was continually extending itself, yet had not, in less than five centuries, subverted idolatry in the ancient world, what is the inference? It is, that the diffusion of Christianity was not considered as an object altogether distinct from its general maintenance among believers, but that in some way or other, both were provided for in one common system of discipline; and this appears to have been actually the case. The first preachers of the Gospel contemplated its extension to the uttermost parts of the earth: but this extension was to be effected through themselves, or through persons whom they or their successors should commission; and in this way the propagation of religion would be only an expansion of the catholic church; in other words, it was so arranged that the established principles of Christian order should be taken to apply not merely to those who, at any given period, were within the Christian pale, but that all who might enter it should acquire their knowledge of Christ in conjunction with those principles, and be received through the instrumentality of persons who were themselves in the unity of the church.

That I may not, however, rest a fact of so much importance upon mere assertion, I will state to you very briefly (fo-

briefly it must be) what appears to have been the method in which Christianity was disseminated in the primitive times. I have remarked that early ecclesiastical history, after the apostolic age, is not what, according to modern ideas, we might expect to find it, much engaged in the subject of missions. The command of Christ, "to baptize all nations[1]," may be considered as the authority under which Christians are required to be solicitous for the diffusion of the Gospel; the command, however, was given to the eleven, and to those by implication, as well as by the especial assurance of divine aid[2], who might be joined with them, or succeed them in the work; to say nothing of the case of St. Paul, whose commission, though subsequent to that of the twelve, was directly from Christ. By the apostles themselves and their associates, as some have gathered from the apostolic writings, about seventy churches were founded, reaching to Babylon, eastward, and westward, as far as Spain[3]; if indeed St. Paul ever accomplished his meditated journey thither[4], and if St. Peter, in speaking of the church at Babylon[5], meant the ancient capital of Chaldea, neither of which seems probable. At any rate, Christianity was planted in the apostolic age in most of the regions subject to the power of Rome, though the converts were almost every where but a small part of the whole population. It does not, however, appear that any churches were planted except by the apostles, or by persons acting in connexion with them: the work of conversion began in unity, whatever were the divisions which arose afterwards; and these divisions were never so great as to obliterate the effects of the order in which conversion commenced. What then was the course pursued? Of the proceedings of the apostles I need not speak; it is sometimes said that they were missionaries, as the name applies: missionaries they were indeed; going forth in the power and the spirit of Christ, and, as was to be expected, teaching the same doctrines and establishing churches, the members of which could meet in conscientious communion, knowing of no other separation or distinction than that of place. If the apostles, however, required assistance, as we know that they did, still more would their successors:

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[2] Matt. xxviii. 20.
[3] *Fabricius, Lux Evang.* cap. 5.
[4] Rom. xv. 24.
[5] 1 Pet. v. 13.

something analogous to a missionary system was indispensable, and this was supplied, partly by the persons denominated evangelists, and partly by catechists. Evangelists were missionaries in the strictest sense; their business was, as we learn from Eusebius [1], to preach Christ to those who had not heard of his name, and to deliver them to the Gospels. It is asserted, however, on the same authority, that these men were disciples of the apostles: that they laboured not merely to found new churches, but to confirm and consolidate those which were already planted; and that even at the time of which the historian is speaking, the reign of Trajan, the Holy Spirit still wrought mighty works by their hands: of course they were under His especial guidance, and thus was the original purpose of edification and unity, and a knowledge of the truth, fulfilled: for St. Paul declares that all offices in the church, including that of evangelists, were designed "for the edification (the building up) of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man." [2] These evangelists, therefore, though they seem not to have been confined in their mission to any certain spot longer than the occasion required, were yet recognised members of the church, and amenable to its discipline. Upon this subject *Mosheim*, a Lutheran, and not a strenuous asserter of episcopacy, has remarked, that "in early times it was undoubtedly the custom for such members of any church as might be desirous of imitating the example of the apostles, and propagating the Gospel among the heathen, to apply to the bishop for his "license and to enter on their travels under his sanction." [3] Order, it seems, was not then thought incompatible with enterprise or with holy influences, but rather, perhaps, to have been among the tests and evidences of a commission from God.

The other provision to which I alluded for the extension of the Gospel, was in the appointment of catechists. As the evangelists were sent among barbarians, to whom possibly the name of Christ was unknown, the catechists were to bring into the fold of Christ the heathen who resided in the neigh-

[1] *Eccl. Hist.* 3. 37. Κηρύττειν τὸν Χριστὸν φιλοτιμούμενοι, καὶ τὴν τῶν Θείων Εὐαγγελίων παραδιδόναι γραφὴν

[2] Eph. iv. 12.

[3] *Commentaries on the Affairs of the Christians*, translated by *Vidal*, vol. i. p. 503.

bourhood of any Christian church: the conversion of these was an object contemplated in every Christian establishment: all who expressed a desire to be acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel, were considered as standing in a certain relation to the church: not a close one indeed, till they had given evidence of their being in earnest, but yet one which was publicly avowed: places contiguous to the church were set apart for their instruction: catechisms were compiled for their use; catechumens were allowed to be present in the church during the sermon, and while certain prayers were offered for their illumination [1], in which they were required to join; and, if I mistake not, even the heathen who had not openly professed a desire to be instructed in our faith, were not altogether excluded.

These then appear to have been the missionary proceedings of the first ages; but all antiquity abounds with circumstances tending to show, that the propagation of the Gospel was in close connexion with order and discipline. Churches were built under the bishop's sanction, signified by his visiting the spot and fixing a cross [2]; no clergyman could be ordained but with a specific and local charge [3]: a convert could not be admitted to the orders either of priest or deacon, till he had brought over his whole family, whether infidels or heretics, to the catholic church [4]; and one of the canons of the council of Chalcedon provides for the consecration and subordination of bishops in foreign parts.[5] Regulations such as these may be thought trivial in the laxity of modern times, still this was the system under which our faith was disseminated, and which had manifestly the blessing of God.

We may, however, be asked, were there then no considerable schisms in the primitive ages? It is easy to reply, that there were several, and that thus the Scripture was fulfilled: but if it be required to estimate the degree in which they retarded the progress of the Gospel, the task would lead me far beyond my limits into curious and difficult research. Briefly, however, I would observe, that no where do we find in Scripture that these are matters of little moment; they are

[1] *Bingham's Christian Antiquities*, xiv. 5. 3.
[2] *Beveregii in Pandectas Canonum annott.* vol. ii. p. 168.
[3] *Bingham*, iv. 6. 1.
[4] *Bingham*, iv. 3. 13.
[5] Canon xxviii. apud *Beveregium*.

spoken of in terms of reprobation as evidences of a carnal spirit; and we read, that the fomenters of division should be "marked," and, after due admonition, "rejected:" still, however, many such were found, and the truth prevailed, not *through* them, but *against* them. And why then, it is said, may it not be so now? Far be it from us to doubt of the final issue, but we deprecate what may intervene; and there are circumstances, perhaps, which made the divisions of early times less adverse to the propagation of the Gospel than those of the present: I allude not merely to the miraculous powers and influences which prevailed for a while in the church, and through which the Gospel was firmly established notwithstanding all impediments: it may be added, that the points in dispute were generally of a nature in which the learned only, or pretenders to learning, would take an interest; they were not so much *practical* questions on which all must declare themselves: and even in those differences the same tenets, however erroneous, were for the most part maintained in the same district, so as to exhibit to the neighbouring heathen the appearance of unity. The history of Montanism, of Donatism, and even of Arianism, though the latter two did not appear till the beginning of the fourth century, will furnish more or less an illustration of these remarks: and probably it may be true, that controversies upon any point had then less hold upon ordinary minds, when as yet men were not led by the enjoyment of political freedom to confound the maintenance of theological opinions with the exercise of civil rights. But what would have been the case, if in any of the provinces in which a ministry was already exercised by persons duly commissioned and ordained, and the catholic doctrines were taught, what would have been the consequence if teachers had appeared impugning the form of church government till then universally received, and promulgating new opinions as to the sacrament by which men are admitted to the Christian covenant? Though we cannot estimate amidst varying circumstances the force of the resistance which such obstacles might have opposed to the progress of the Gospel, we may venture to affirm that more pernicious questions could not have been agitated in a heathen land: under what form of church government Christian societies shall live; what is the authority of their teachers, and whence derived; and

whether infants can or cannot be brought to Christ are practical controversies, if any are practical, and they necessarily produce a diversity and a collision, which the heathen (I speak it of my own knowledge) do not fail to observe. It is, indeed, in this point of view, and not merely for the sake of instituting a comparison between primitive and modern missions that I have adverted to the subject; and on this head, if we have any interest in Christian proceedings connected with this country, there is somewhat to regret. Under a system which liberally allows to all denominations of persons permission to settle in India, for the purpose of imparting to "the native inhabitants religious and moral improvement[1]," it is surely to be wished that the terms of the grant were more strictly observed: the "*native* inhabitants" are not benefited by the preaching of missionaries in English; nor do purely missionary objects account for that preference which is so frequently given by missionaries to a residence among Europeans, though it is obvious that the numbers and influence of a sect may thus be increased much more rapidly than by patient, and often ineffectual labour, bestowed upon the heathen. Still the true missionary will consider, that to encounter and overcome difficulties is actually his calling; and he will account it a greater work to have imparted to a single pagan the knowledge of a Saviour, than to number a hundred Christians among his proselytes. The success, however, which has attended the preaching of missionaries among Europeans, makes a prominent figure in some of their details: there have even been instances, at some stations, of direct interference with the chaplain; nor have the most diligent of the clergy been altogether secure against intrusion. To consider a system, of which such proceedings should form a part, as the best adapted to the conversion of the heathen, would be not merely to renounce the wisdom which the Almighty so signally prospered, but to substitute what has hardly the character of common prudence.

Still it may be asked, is there no way in which the different sects, now unhappily dividing the Christian world, may essentially and unexceptionably contribute to the propagation of the Gospel? I should shrink from such a conclusion,

[1] 53 Geo. 3. s. 155.

however legitimate were the process, by which it might seem to be deduced: I should hesitate to believe for a moment, that laborious and pious and benevolent men, of any religious denomination, could be altogether disqualified for furthering such a work: if they would turn their attention chiefly to the elementary instruction of youth, — to the dissemination of European knowledge and arts, — to the improvement of morals, — to facilitating the acquisition of languages, — to bringing us acquainted with the opinions, and habits, and literature of those whom we wish to convert, and generally to breaking up and preparing the soil for the seed of the Gospel, they would indeed be valuable auxiliaries in the Christian cause; and the most inconsiderable sect might thus attain a degree of usefulness, if not of worldly renown, which the most prominent cannot hope for in the present state of things.

It will, however, immediately occur, that this is more than can be expected in the actual circumstances. There are strong indications, to some of which I have already alluded, that influence and power are among the objects which sometimes actuate sectarian zeal. What next, then, should we recommend? So long as these objects shall be disclaimed, it will be only to act consistently with the disavowal of them, and of all views, except those of compassion for the heathen, which alone are professed; to avoid, instead of seeking collision, with the established church, or even with any sect which has accomplished so much, that it may be said to be already in possession. The practicability of adopting this course of conduct cannot, for the present, be questioned. What immeasurable tracts still remain untrodden by believers in Christ! What a field is still open in three out of the four quarters of the globe to him who is a missionary indeed! to the man who is content to forego the comforts of European society, and to live among rude or superstitious tribes, seeking only to humanize and enlighten them, and to show them "the way, and the truth, and the life." By such a course of proceeding the work of conversion would be more rapid than it is at present: and though nations might thus be gained over to modes of faith, which we could not in all repects approve, yet convinced that Christianity in any of its forms is beyond comparison better than paganism, we should bless God for the result: nor would our satisfaction be subject to

the abatement which must ever attend it, when in the partial successes of various sects, all cultivating the same soil, we see the foundation of divisions and disputes, which must one day dishonour the Christian name.

Before I dismiss this topic, let me announce to you, what cannot be heard with indifference, that the chartered *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts* considering that the establishment of episcopacy in this country is favourable to the design, are turning their thoughts to the founding of Eastern missions; and with this view they have solicited royal authority to collect contributions in the churches throughout England and Wales. Their object, I have no doubt, will be to tread, as closely as the times and circumstances will allow, in the footsteps of the primitive church: and if we look to their labours in other parts, it is not presumptuous to hope that here also they will have the blessing of God.[1]

But though it be time that I proceed to speak of the immediate duties of the clergy, the view which I have taken of a collateral subject is not foreign from the present occasion. The propagation of Christianity among the heathen, and its maintenance among those who profess it, though distinct in their immediate object, are connected in their ultimate results: and the best allies which the true missionary can desire are a body of active regular clergy. The heathen, when they are urged to embrace the Gospel, will naturally enquire into the lives of Christians, or rather, without enquiry, they will exercise their own observation: and if it be possible to conceive a situation in which zeal, piety, and, perhaps, talents, are thrown away, it is that of the preacher to the heathen, who is labouring to make them believe in opposition to what they see. "By their fruits ye shall know them[2]," is a test which the Gospel cannot evade: it is the test which itself has established, not indeed of its divine truth, for that would be the same, though not a knee on earth should bow at the name of Jesus, but of the reception which it may expect in the world. Here then is the proper sphere of clerical exertion: in the most restricted notion of your duties, if you go not beyond

[1] The Society's College, near Calcutta, was founded on the 15th December, 1820.

[2] Matt. vii. 20.

the limits of your flocks, you are called upon to take care, so far as may be, that there be nothing within your own fold which can cause the heathen to blaspheme. But what does even an approximation to such a state of things suppose? Surely, nothing less, than that every one of you have a just conception of his office: and high is the dignity, higher than in any worldly sense, of an authorised and faithful minister of the word. To be a teacher, an adviser, a comforter, a dispenser of ordinances, which Christ instituted as means of grace, an interpreter of Holy Writ, an example to believers, an advocate of the truth against them who would gainsay or pervert it, an ambassador for Christ, and a minister of reconciliation with God; to be, in short, set apart by the Holy Spirit to rescue men from the snares of passion and illusion, and so to conduct them through things temporal, that they finally lose not the things eternal, — these are the functions of the Christian pastor: and where there is a prevailing sense of their importance, with an earnest though imperfect devotion to the cause of Christ, they extort the tribute of reverence even from the children of the world. But then, be it remembered, that all this is personal; that the high distinction is not merely lost, it is converted into a subject of reproach and dismay, when men invested with the sacred character falsify or even forget it. What member of society has less claim to respect than the clergyman, who, unmindful of the most solemn engagements, has no pleasure or apparent interest in his duties? who is satisfied if he escape official censure? who calculates how he may best consult his own ease? who sanctions a suspicion, that he regards his profession merely as a maintenance? and who betrays his weariness of what he feels to be its restraints? Whatever be the light in which any man may himself consider these things, I would tell him in the words of St. Austin, speaking of this very character, "*Nihil apud Deum tristius, et miserius, et damnabilius.*"[1]

But not to advert any further to a case, which it is hoped is every where of rare occurrence, there may still be in the clergy, especially in this country, indications unobserved by themselves, of a want of due consideration as to the importance of their functions. In England, for instance, no parish

[1] Tom. ii. p. 19. edit. Benedict.

is left for a day without provision for the duty: but the same feeling does not prevail in India. I readily admit, that here the circumstances are different: but it is the mischief arising from this difference, which I would counteract. It is true, that here, however urgent the cause of absence, no assistance, generally speaking, can be had: the nearest clergyman is probably at the distance of one or two hundred miles. What, then, is the point to which I would advert? It is an error into which all of us very easily fall; that of excusing or underrating mischief, which might be avoided, by recollecting that it cannot be avoided always: the mind thus becomes reconciled to it, as if it were a reasonable consequence, that there cannot be much to deprecate in what must sometimes be endured. I would remind you, then, that the evil, though sometimes unavoidable, of leaving a station for months together, is one of the heaviest inconveniences and severest checks, to which religion is exposed in this diocese. In the absence of the chaplain, the Lord's Day may indeed be observed as a day of rest and private meditation; though this, probably, would not long be the case, where it was not publicly and visibly distinguished; but that must be the utmost: and as to other duties, lay-baptism will intrude under the plea of necessity, and laymen must officiate at the interment of the dead; to the Holy Communion none will have access, however urgent their desire to receive it; and the sick and dying will be left without spiritual support or advice: in short, every Christian association must be violated, and every Christian habit lost: and I can hardly conceive by what process they can soon be restored. In all cases, therefore, of application for leave of absence, necessity alone should be considered as a justification: in the event of sickness requiring a removal, a medical certificate will of course be transmitted to myself, or in my absence to the archdeacon: and in other cases, where the necessity is not apparent, or the time required seems needlessly long, it should be considered as the discharge of an invidious duty, if any difficulty be made in granting the request.

Connected with this subject is the absence of chaplains from their stations, when they are invited to solemnize marriages at a distance: where this is great, it seems but reasonable, that the parties applying should attend at the station of

the clergyman, or at least within such a distance of it, that their private convenience shall not involve any neglect of his public duties; in which I include, not merely those of the Lord's Day, and at military stations the visiting of the hospitals, but all others, which really appertain to his office: and I will add, that it becomes the clergy to discountenance the strange notion, which some seem to entertain, that to give validity to the marriage contract is the most important of their functions.

It may also be proper before I dismiss you, to notice a few other points connected with your ordinary duties: some of these admonitions I repeat from my primary charge, and others are founded upon the returns then made to my articles of inquiry. I am to remind you, then, that marriages must be solemnized in the church or chapel, if there be one within a reasonable distance, and at any rate within the canonical hours; and that the clergy have no authority to marry without the publication of banns, unless this be superseded by a licence: the sixty-second canon is explicit, both upon the law and the penalty.—Another rule to be observed is, the punctual half-yearly return of marriages, baptisms, and burials, to the registrar of the archdeaconry: the object, however, of this rule will be defeated, if the entries be not regular and complete: in some parts of the diocese they have been very defective. There have too been cases, in which it was discovered, that children have been baptized by one name and registered by another; and in some, that there had been no registration at all; such negligence in a point of such importance is inexcusable: where the register is not at hand, a memorandum should be taken on the spot, and the registration be made with the least possible delay.—Another duty of primary importance, is visiting the sick soldiery at military stations; and I cannot think it sufficient, that the clergyman should attend occasionally, or merely when he is sent for: this would be to suppose that the ignorant, and possibly the profligate, are the best judges of their spiritual wants. In an order upon this subject, issued while the chaplains were under military authority, I find it directed, that the military hospitals shall be visited twice in the week.[1] It is impossible

[1] Circular Letter, by command of His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, dated 8th November, 1811.

not to honour the benevolence which suggested this regulation: and I should be sorry, if a laxer discipline were now to prevail. But let the visit be made in the true spirit of such a duty: let the sick be invited to confidence, and feel that they have a friend: listen with sympathy to the sad tale of past neglect of God: if it be necessary, forbear not to display "the terror of the Lord[2];" and seize upon the moment of contrition to unfold the doctrines of pardon and peace, and the efficacy of sincere repentance and amendment of life, through a Saviour. To be cold or indifferent in duties like these is to lose one of the fairest opportunities of doing good, while it would indicate in any clergyman a general unfitness for his work.—On the subject of schools I should not think it necessary to make any remark, if a total silence might not seem to disparage an object of the first importance. In some parts of the diocese, the clergy, to their honour, are doing much in this way; and wherever there is a chaplain, it may fairly be expected that there will be a well-conducted school. I will only add, that the books used by the National Society may be obtained on application to the several committees of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and that the system is now practised and may be learnt at any of the three presidencies.—Lastly, let me once for all remind the clergy, that whenever any thing is wanted for the decent and due performance of divine service, as proper books, a surplice or sacramental plate, to apply for them through the accustomed channel of correspondence: it is not excusable to be without them, where they may so readily be had. I would not here observe, if some indistinct notions on the subject had not gone abroad, that the clergy are in all matters connected with their official concerns to correspond with myself, or in my absence, with the archdeacons; and that they are in all respects under ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

After having thus called your attention to various particulars connected with the regular performance of your duties, I need not enlarge generally upon the topic of regularity and discipline: still I must repeat, till the admonition be absolutely superfluous, that order and system must in all things be maintained: there is, especially at the present day,

[2] 2 Cor. v. 11.

a tendency in the world to neglect or to decry them; but they are of God: they prevailed in the church in apostolic and primitive times, in a degree which would now be stigmatized as superstition: without them, even in the affairs of the world, nothing great and good can be accomplished: they are the principles which hold together the works of the Creator; we find them distinctly recognized in his word: in matters of religion they are especially required; God is not the author of confusion in the churches of the saints:[1] we solemnly pledge ourselves to observe them, in our ordination vows: in this country the natives have no notion of any religion without them: they form, in short, the strength, the whole strength, of false religions; and the want of them is the weakness of the true one. Impressed with these truths, you will not fail by precept, as well as by example, to uphold the constitution of the church, in which you were ordained: nor is it bigotry, which I would recommend, unless, indeed, in that sense in which every thing is so denominated, which is opposed to a torrent of undistinguishing generalities, or to the dogmatism of some aspiring sect. They, if such there be, who are not verily persuaded, that in doctrine, in discipline, and in worship, our church is framed after the model of Scripture and of the primitive times, have indeed placed themselves in a painful conflict between conscience and solemn obligation: but they who are so persuaded, as I doubt not are all of you, will maintain it against opposition; not, however, in a spirit, which serves but to indicate the weakness of a cause, but learnedly, charitably, calmly, and firmly: and though even thus we may not escape the charge of prejudice, still the abandonment of principles, to which we are pledged, might subject us to worse imputations: and as to the consequences, it may be sufficient to observe, that if there be any laxity upon points of this kind, it is only among ourselves.

In conclusion, it would afford me the highest satisfaction, if I could announce to you, that the wants of this diocese, noticed by me on a former occasion, were in great measure already relieved: in the archdeaconry, however, of Calcutta, to which they are principally confined, much may be confi-

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

dently expected: the supreme government have concurred with me [1] in the expediency of recommending to the Honourable Court of Directors, a large increase in the number of chaplains; the want of whom in that archdeaconry is indeed very great; and the commencement of one church of becoming appearance, and the preparations for erecting another within the same district, are, I doubt not, the forerunners of similar works, tending to advance the credit of our religion and the glory of God. The present moment, indeed, is not one in which we can have cause to despair: something may be looked for from the condition of the church at home: for though it is assailed by various enemies, yet has more been done for its security and advancement within the last few years, than at any period for a century preceding. The act enforcing the residence of incumbents, and providing for the better support of stipendiary curates, with sundry provisions relating to the duties of the clergy, seems wisely calculated to remove evils, which had become inveterate: and the munificent grant of parliament for building churches, aided by a powerful society having the same object in view, will open to the population of the country free access to the established worship, and leave to the cause of dissent or schism, those only who approve its principles. Nor ought we to forget, that the pastoral character has, at no period, been higher among the English clergy, than it is at the present day: never has more attention been paid to lowly duties, or greater activity evinced in doing good. For these things all who love our Zion, however dispersed through the wide world, will give praise and blessing unto God: but I cannot believe that we shall derive no actual advantage from this increasing interest in the maintenance of religion at home: the propriety and the duty of upholding it in a splendid dependency of the empire will be felt in a proportionate degree: and if ever there be a crisis when this branch of the national church can have little to apprehend from neglect, it is, surely, when Providence for its own good ends has committed to British stewardship the riches and resources of the East.

But, after all, my reverend brethren, be the means afforded what they may, to you must I look, under Providence, to

[1] In a letter dated 25th September 1813.

give them full effect. I call on you, therefore, I solemnly conjure you to "take heed unto the ministry, which ye have received of the Lord, that ye fulfil it[2];" to reflect on its endless importance to yourselves as well as to your flocks, and even to those who as yet know not the way of life. A body of clergy, though not very numerous, acting on common principles, breathing the same spirit, and speaking the same thing, combining zeal with the love of order, courteous without secularity, sedate without being austere, respectable from their education and attainments, and revered as living examples of the power of the Gospel over the heart,—such men can never be without influence in any region of the civilized world: they possess, indeed, an efficiency, which is not properly their own, but is rather the operation, in and through them, of the Holy Spirit. Commending you, therefore, together with myself, to his guidance in all things, I pray that we may be enabled to render true and faithful service to the great Head of the church; and that having contributed in our several stations, by fidelity to our engagements, by soundness of doctrine, and by holiness of life, by zeal, by knowledge, and by charity, to promote His glory upon earth, we may, in life's last retrospect, give the praise unto Him, and with no reliance but on His merits, hope to be received to mercy.

[2] Col. iv. 17.

A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO

THE CLERGY AT CALCUTTA,

In December, 1821.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THIS is the third time that I have been permitted to call you together for the purposes of these triennial solemnities. It is hardly possible, under any circumstances, to reflect on the lapse of such intervals of human life, without something of serious emotion: but in the country, in which Providence has appointed us our respective tasks, it will be to all of us, and especially to those who are advanced in years, a subject of solemn thought and thankfulness, that we have been preserved, amidst the ordinary havoc made by the climate, and even amidst the wide devastations of an epidemic disease, still to offer unto God the tribute of our humble services, still to labour for the good of souls, and to work out our own salvation: to be still telling of the goodness of God among our brethren, to grow stronger in the faith, to gain fresh accessions of light and knowledge, and, which is the proper use of these, to be enabled to impart them to those around us, who have not enjoyed the same opportunities, or been equally blessed in their work.

It is, however, on the presumption that we have been not merely mindful of the general uses of life, but especially and pre-eminently of the sacred trust committed to us, that any

reflections on our past preservation can be unaccompanied with pain: the mercies of God cease to be mercies, whenever they are abused: to have lived idly and unprofitably should be with all, who think, a subject of regret: but with ourselves the case will be stronger: we have been separated, (let us never forget it,) and solemnly set apart unto God: has he purposes to accomplish in respect to our brethren? we have pledged ourselves to be His instruments: has He given to them a revelation of His will? we are, within our proper sphere, its constituted interpreters: has He designs of mercy to be gradually communicated to the whole human race? we are to encourage the hope, and to stimulate the desire, of such a consummation: has He appointed us to be as lights in the world? if that which should illumine and cheer and comfort, be found to be darkness, how great must that darkness be? To have neglected these high considerations, must implicate us in a degree of guilt, of which we cannot be self-convicted without feelings of remorse and anguish, as having betrayed a trust delegated to us by God's Holy Spirit, under sanctions the most awful, and involving consequences both to ourselves and to others, which may reach through all eternity.

It is, therefore, among the salutary provisions of our church, that the clergy are periodically called together by authorities, which they recognise at the time of their ordination, to have their attention immediately directed to their duties and concerns; to the state of things in the Christian world, and more especially within their own sphere of action; to be admonished, if any thing be amiss; to be encouraged to persevere against difficulties; to be warned in what quarter danger is chiefly to be apprehended: to be reminded where good may be attempted with the fairest prospect of success; and to be brought, as far as possible, to that unity of sentiment and action, which should distinguish the clergy of the same establishment.

There is, however, something peculiar in *our* condition and circumstances: we stand in the same general relation to our flocks, as do the bishops and clergy of dioceses in countries wholly Christian: but moreover we owe something to the millions among whom we dwell, and to whom the name, or at least the faith of Christ, is unknown: we are brought,

therefore, into contact with objects, which our brethren in England view, not indeed with indifference, but at a distance, which precludes actual and direct participation: and though our ordinary relation to our Christian brethren remains in full force, it is not perhaps wholly unaffected by circumstances which are extraneous. We owe, in fact, the same solicitude, both in measure and in kind, to our countrymen; but in the discharge of the duties to which it will prompt us, we shall hardly lose sight of the connexion which subsists, between the advancement of faith and holiness among Christians, and the possible interest which may thus be excited in those, who are without: in other words, the *parochial* character of the clergy, so far as in the condition of the country this character is attainable, will not be wholly unmixed with that missionary interest, which, in such circumstances especially, will be created by zeal for the religion of Christ. If, then, in this view of the case I am generally correct, it seems proper on all such occasions as the present, to advert to the condition of the heathen around us, as well as to the immediate subject of these solemnities, the positive and appointed duties of the clergy. The train of thought into which I am led, requires that I should first speak of that, which, though important, is only collateral to the main design.

Unquestionably, within a very few years a change has taken place in the sentiment of the people around us. It was once hardly known, even by the better informed among them, that we possessed any system of religious belief, or indeed that there were any considerable modes of faith existing among men, except the two, which divide, though unequally, the population of Hindoostan. They viewed their conquerors as men of enterprise and talent and bravery, skilled in the arts of war and government, and, if just and equitable in their administration, owing these virtues to something national or constitutional, or even to self-interest, rather than to the fear of God. Of our views upon subjects connected with religion, little could be known: though we did not *practise* idolatry, we were not in general very forward to condemn it: policy and interest, not even yet perhaps so effectually disclaimed as might be wished, seemed rather to recommend that it should be numbered among harmless prejudices, and treated with respect: and any intercourse with the natives, tending

directly to religious discussions and aiming at their conviction, was probably extremely rare. It cannot be necessary to insist at much length, upon the contrast exhibited in the present state of things. Curiosity is awakened to ascertain, what opinions we really hold upon the most momentous of all questions; and the inquisitive have learnt, that we have a religion, which we not only believe to be true, but to be the only truth: they perceive that we are even anxious to impart it to them, considering them as lost in darkness and delusion: and that we are forward to show the reasons and grounds of our faith, while they themselves have nothing to allege but an obscure and exaggerated antiquity, believed but not recorded, or the absurd pretence, that intrinsically there is little difference between us, as if their books really inculcated, or even hinted at, the doctrine of salvation through the Son of God.

Of the change, however, which has taken place, the most prominent evidence will be found in circumstances of recent occurrence. Sanguine as have been the expectations of a few, and cautious as were the many in speaking to the natives upon the subject of religion, who could have believed, that any would have been found among them thus early to *provoke* religious discussions, and openly to impugn the fundamental doctrines of Christianity? to cavil at its mysteries, to deny the atonement, and to attempt to reduce the stupendous scheme of Revelation to some, not all, of the Divine sayings, which it ascribes to Christ; teaching that these are sufficient unto salvation? and all this with an air of research and learning borrowed from our biblical criticism [1]: while others in a lighter way publish their objections to our holy faith, or their misconceptions of what it teaches, and challenge us to reply.

It is impossible for us to know precisely, in what way, or by what combination of means, God in his secret counsels may purpose to establish his truth: we may, however, humbly hope, that these are favourable symptoms. The religion of Christ is not, indeed, to be propagated by the mere exercise of human reason: the appeal must be as much to the consciences of the heathen, as to their understandings: they can "believe unto righteousness," (and no other belief is worth inculcating) only "with the heart." [2] Still it is somewhat to

[1] In sundry tracts by *Ram Mohun Roy*. [2] Romans x. 10.

remove the obstacles, by which the avenues of the heart are closed: to gain over the understanding to our side, convicting it of ignorance or prejudice, and thus to teach humility. It were, indeed, contrary to the character of our religion, and even to scripture, to believe, that argument is wholly useless in its propagation: it is supported by evidences peculiar to itself, or rather it is the only faith in the world, which has any thing like evidence to produce; but it cannot be supposed, that of this no advantage should be taken: we are directed to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us the reason of our hope."[1] We find our Saviour continually arguing from prophecy: and that St. Paul "mightily convinced the Jews, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.[2]

We cannot, therefore, view with indifference the disposition which has appeared among us, to examine and even to impugn Christianity: we are thankful that we have lived to witness this crisis, notwithstanding the gross misconceptions and perversions, to which at first it may give rise. It proves, at least, that an interest is excited, and that the most formidable impediment hitherto opposed to our religion, that of apathy, is giving way. We may lament, indeed, and must lament, the attempt to raise a new sect among us, divided as we are already in the midst of a heathen land: we must lament that the faith, even of a single individual, in the great doctrine of our Saviour's divinity, should be at all affected by the opinions of one, who without disparagement must be considered as a novice in Christian researches. We have, however, nothing to apprehend as to the general result: the Socinian heresy, though the most Anti-Christian of all heresies, is perhaps the least to be dreaded at the present day. It appeals to what few comparatively feel, while it disappoints all the wants and weaknesses of the human heart. The event, indeed, serves to shew, to what endless aberrations the mind is subject, when the "old paths" and the "good ways" are forsaken, as we follow them in our national church, marked out to us from the primitive times, and men treat religion as a newly-invented science, in which as yet there are no fixed principles, and all is to be settled by experiment.

[1] 1 Peter iii. 15. [2] Acts xviii. 28.

In speaking, however, of favourable changes, more may be said. Idolatry is certainly disavowed by many, in principle at least, in whose minds, but a few years since, no doubt on the subject had been raised: and it appears that the natives, wherever there are schools, are willing that their children should receive instruction: which, if it be not Christian, can hardly be afterwards made subservient to the false views of nature and of theology, contained in their sacred books. It is easy, however, to attach to these and to all other favourable symptoms, more importance than really belongs to them: and there is reason to apprehend, that this, in some instances, actually happens, especially in England, among those who readily believe what they wish, and who have not the means of correcting their judgment by actual observation. And if this be true to any great extent, the mischief is apparent: there will be, at no distant period, a recoil of public feeling: the sanguine, when they are disappointed, are the most subject to despondency. The tide at present runs strongly in favour of almost every attempt to disseminate Christianity, from whatever quarter it may proceed, and without much inquiry into its probable results: but if it shall be found, that facts were not impartially stated, and that undue expectation was raised by the suppression of difficulties, it will be no longer easy to obtain support for the soberest and most legitimate enterprises. The truth therefore is, on all accounts, to be told unreservedly: and they, who are solicitous for the diffusion of the Gospel, while they duly estimate the magnitude of the undertaking, should be satisfied with the reasonable hope, that though the consummation may be distant, their labours of love, with the divine blessing, will not ultimately have been in vain.

It were, indeed, contrary to all which is recorded in the early history of the Gospel, to suppose that its establishment through these vast regions may be accomplished, within the term of any human life. We are apt to lay great stress upon the rapidity with which the religion of Christ was disseminated in the course of the first century; at a time, however, when the hand of God was visibly put forth to show that he aided the work. In about seventy years from our Saviour's Ascension, the Christians, at least in the northern parts of Asia Minor, should appear, according to the well-known

statement of the younger Pliny, to have constituted a great majority. About this time, however, the miraculous powers, if not absolutely withdrawn, began to be more sparingly dispensed: we do not afterwards find, that the progress of the Gospel was at all proportionate to this rapid increase; and some centuries elapsed, before it became generally prevalent throughout the Roman empire. It has been computed, though not from premises which admit of any exactness, that at the commencement of the reign of Diocletian, about fifty thousand persons constituted the whole of the Christian community at Rome. [1]

The question, then, will obviously arise, whether the difficulties, which Christianity had to encounter in the early ages, were greater, upon the whole, than they are at present, with reference to the state of India? To enter at large into such an inquiry would far exceed my present limits; but a very brief comparison may perhaps assist the judgment: the advantages we possess, positive or negative, may be the following. In the primitive times Christianity had to contend against the grossest misrepresentations: its professors were charged with licentiousness and atheism; they were in fact, for the most part, obscure persons, of whom any thing might be said with impunity, and with little chance of refutation: the very reverse is the case with Christians in this country.—The early Christians were also confounded, and almost identified in public opinion, with the Jews; whose very name was associated with ridicule and opprobrium. Philosophy too and learning were every thing in the estimation of the ancient Pagans; whereas the Christians were not only for the most part unlearned, but were represented as the enemies of all learning by their very profession. Here again the contrast is manifest: the Hindoo learning bears no proportion to that of the ancient Greeks, nor is the little possessed held in the same esteem: while Christians in this country are not only learned, at least as a people, but evidently show, that the dissemination of knowledge is a part of their system.—Again, among the subjects of the Roman empire, the worship of the gods was generally considered as connected with the stability of

[1] Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ, vol. iii. p. 43.

of the national greatness:[1] Rome had been founded in Paganism, and had prospered under it; and as Christianity advanced, it was found to decline. But national glory is not an idea familiar to the minds of Hindoos; nor in any supposed desertion of them by their gods could they sink into deeper depression.— Moreover, it may be observed, that in the early ages Christianity was an experiment: if its effects were visible on a few, it was not yet known how it would operate upon nations; whereas now it is seen to be the parent of virtue, of knowledge, and of freedom; in short, the firmest bond of states, and the surest pledge of their greatness. In the last place, it may be remarked, that the early Christians had not the means of diffusing their tenets by the use of printing: it might seem that this gives us an immense advantage; but, perhaps, it may be over-rated: the want of other means of conversion to any great extent enforced the necessity every where of oral instruction and of preaching, which doubtless would be far more efficacious, and which, so far as we can judge, will always be found indispensable; and the minds of catechumens were well initiated, and men came prepared to the reading of the Holy Scriptures.[2] It appears, indeed, that in the early ages, versions of the Scriptures were made principally, if not entirely, with a view to the wants of those who had already embraced, or professed a desire of embracing, Christianity: the services of the church could not well proceed without them.[3] Still it will not be disputed, that the use of printing must be numbered among other advantages; especially if more be not expected from it than is reasonable, so as to create disappointment. It exceedingly facilitates discussion with the heathen, who are at all interested in ascertaining what the Gospel is, and what it requires: and the Scriptures, especially in separate portions, and tracts upon Christianity, may be found, with the Divine blessing, to awaken curiosity at least among some, to whom preachers have not been sent.

Thus far it might appear, that the impediments to the progress of the Gospel in this country are small compared

[1] By Libanius in his Oration for the Temples; and by others. See Lardner's Works, 8vo. Vol. VIII. p. 459.

[2] Eusebii Præp. Evang. XII. 1. Bingham, X. 1, 7.

[3] Semler de Christianorum Statu. Vol. I. p. 60.

with those, which were opposed to its early teachers: but the balance probably will not be found to be much in our favour, if we examine the other side of the statement. One of the most obvious differences is, that, instead of our being here an obscure and persecuted people, we are the dominant power. In the manner, however, in which hitherto our rule has been exercised, (and the same moderation, it is hoped, will always be continued,) our power is evidently of no use in the propagation of the Gospel: no boon or encouragement has ever been holden out, or any preference shown, to converts: it may be thought, perhaps, that political apprehensions have operated rather the other way; it were idle to dissemble, that persons, neither few in number, nor inconsiderable in influence, have thought, that our interests in a splendid possession are best secured by letting every thing remain in its present state. But without insisting on this point, I would remark the advantage, for such it was, which the cause of Christianity in the early ages derived from persecution: that it suffered much, is true, and even that it seemed at one period to be nearly extinguished: an imperial inscription is still preserved, in which the triumphant expression occurs, "NOMINE CHRISTIANORUM DELETO."[1] But this was only according to man's judgment: persecution had been from the beginning, under the superintending providence of God, one of the most fruitful sources of conversion: the fortitude and constancy of Christians had a power beyond that of preaching. Among the earlier and most eminent converts to the Gospel was Justin Martyr; who, amidst much admiration of its doctrines, confesses that the spectacle of the calm endurance of suffering for the sake of Christ chiefly determined him to become a Christian.[2] It is further to be considered, and it is remarkable, that the heathen, who were converted in early times, had no sacred books professing to be divine revelations; the Sibylline books need hardly be excepted, as being of a political character: they endeavoured to learn the will of their gods through oracles and divinations; much too uncertain, however, to be appealed to as a general standard. There was nothing at all corresponding with what *we* hear so much of, as the doc-

[1] Gruteri Inscript. Antiq. p. 280. [2] Opera, Ed. 1686. p. 50.

trine of the Shastras. It may be added, that the lives of Christians at the present day, as exhibited among the heathen, are not such as to excite observation by extraordinary piety or purity, so as to induce a belief that their faith is exclusively from God. — In respect of church order and discipline, we can hardly pretend to a comparison with the early Christians: the doctrines which they held on these points, largely as they contributed to the success of the Gospel, are now in disrepute: their divisions, moreover, various as they were upon questions in which the heathen could feel no concern, did not, for the most part, present the *externals* of discord; and they did not in a single instance, before the middle of the fourth century, touch the subject of church government, or call in question the principles, on which the church, as a society instituted by Christ, is founded. — And not least among our difficulties must be mentioned that of caste: In early ecclesiastical history we find instances, no doubt, of uneasiness and displeasure in heathen families at the conversion of any of their number, but nothing which precluded all further intercourse with the convert, or even the interchange of accustomed charities: on the contrary, we read of cases, in which conversion produced no alienation, except in the rites and exercises of religion. We know it to be otherwise here; and yet it has been found, that even the terrors of the law of caste may be defied and despised: and in every such instance we cannot doubt, that it loses a portion of its influence, and that when Christian converts of any consideration shall be sufficiently numerous to form a society among themselves, it will be a mere dead letter.

On the whole, then, it will probably appear that the work of conversion at the present day, and in this country, does not yield, in point of difficulty, to the task of the earlier Christian teachers. But it cannot be supposed that this result is given for any purpose of discouragement; little, in fact, has yet been attempted in any regular way. Whatever is the will of God, (and we are sure that He wills the coming of Christ's kingdom, sooner or later, among all nations,) can never be impossible; and all which we call difficulties are resolvable into our ignorance of the means (for means must be employed) which God will graciously prosper: if this could be ascertained, the whole problem would be solved and the business

done. Now certainly we may hope that the course of proceeding which God will bless will be that which, allowing for the difference of circumstances, comes the nearest to the practice of the primitive times. The difficulty lies in the adaptation, though such adaptation does not appear to have been much a subject of enquiry. Independent experiments, recommended perhaps in some measure by their novelty, have the ascendancy in the public mind. I would not speak of any of these with disrespect, nor yet with unnecessary reserve. To the use of the press, in a religious view, I have already adverted. Some, however, appear to lay great stress on the diffusion of mere knowledge and science, which, though it will assuredly undermine idolatry, will hardly prepare the way for the doctrine of Christ. Men do not usually become more humble as they learn to feel the force of their natural powers; and they who shall have extracted from Christianity all that exalts and ennobles life in reference to the world, will be apt to be satisfied with their attainments and proceed no further. Others have thought, that an extensive study of Sanscrit literature would be productive of great effect, as it would enable us more fully to argue with the heathen out of their own books. This seems, however, to be a concession *in limine* to the authority of those books: and besides its being necessarily a slow process, it would rather, if successful, establish our religion as a species of philosophy, and would thus pervert it; as was the case in the second century among the Christians who emanated from the school of Alexandria: their faith was a forced agreement between Christianity and Platonism. Much difference of opinion has also arisen respecting the medium of communication with the natives, whether it should be in their own languages or in ours, although the question should hardly seem to turn upon the preference, supposing both to be equally practicable: the former will obviously be necessary at the outset, while the latter, surely, is the result to which we should unceasingly direct our efforts. It seems admitted on all hands that the languages of the country are far below the level of the ideas which we have to impart. A competent acquaintance with the English tongue would at once lay open to the minds of the natives, not only the treasures of our religion and knowledge, but our habits of thought and feeling, and thus form a bond of union between them and

us, far stronger, probably, than any which at present exists. The first teachers of Christianity had a great advantage in the prevailing use of the Greek tongue; and we ought, as much as possible, to disseminate our own, with a view to the possession of similar facilities.

Upon the course of proceeding in this great question in the primitive ages, I took occasion to speak at some length when I last addressed you; and if I mistake not, I showed distinctly that the diffusion of Christianity was not effected so much by independent efforts, and unauthorised experiments, as by the gradual expansion of the catholic church. It was thus that the work began: "As they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders, which were at Jerusalem: and so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily."[1] It may, therefore, be expected that nothing would more effectually contribute to the object in question than a considerable church establishment among us, which should at least make our religion conspicuous and procure for it respect, while it countenanced the operations and gave a character to the labours of those who should be employed in the work of conversion. I am not, I need hardly observe, supposing the regular clergy to be missionaries; they have other duties to perform, and almost every where, if they be performed with diligence, sufficient to occupy their time, though no reason can be given why they should not avail themselves of their Christian opportunities to receive converts within the pale of their respective congregations: nor can there be any thing more Christian in its aspect than the spectacle which, I am told, may be seen, of a number of native converts joining with our own people in the service of the church. Missionaries, therefore, acting under proper authority, and subject to control, as in the primitive times, must be employed; and schools in connexion with our missions must be maintained, in which elementary knowledge shall be taught preparatory to the sowing of the seed of the Gospel. Still the prevailing sentiment among the established clergy, on questions of this kind, will always have great weight: missionaries will effect comparatively little if it be not seen with

[1] Acts xvi. 4, 5.

what they are connected, or whence they are sent: and any enormous disproportion between the provision which may be made for the maintenance of religion among ourselves, and for the teaching of it to the heathen, will carry upon the very face of it a confession, that the subject altogether is of less importance in the judgment of some among us than of others. It is, in truth, a question in which much, in the commencement at least, must depend upon externals: as the minds of these people are constituted, and perhaps most minds not habituated to abstraction, they must see before they can understand, or will even enquire. If we err, it should not be on the side of simplicity. In the early times, as we learn from Origen[1], the heathen would ask the Christians, where were their temples? which were comparatively few and mean. The answer might have been, that the Christians then were poor. Whatever has been done among ourselves in this way, has undoubtedly contributed to the change of sentiment among the heathen; and a proportionate effect may be expected from what may be done hereafter. The Christian measures of Constantine, on his conversion, may be ascribed to the influence of his adviser Eusebius; they were, therefore, such as the judgment and extensive experience of that great man recommended, and they were principally the building of churches[2], and a provision for the better observance of the Lord's day.[3]

The question, then, of our church establishment brings us upon our proper ground. At our last meeting I had occasion to notice the signal successes by which this portion of the British empire had been extended, and its power and resources consolidated; and I ventured to express a hope that this circumstance, added to the increased interest upon the subject of religion at home, would be found propitious to the ecclesiastical establishment of British India. At that moment, too, it was known to be the wish of our illustrious ruler to erect a structure which would have been not unworthy of this splendid and daily improving capital, and would have impressed the nations around us with some idea of the honour paid to religion in Europe. The debt of gratitude due to the design is not lessened by its indefinite postponement. Of religious

[1] Contra Celsum, p. 389. Ed. Spencer.
[2] Theodoret, Eccl. Hist. i. 15.
[3] Eusebius de Vita Const. iv. 18.

edifices, however, destined for common use, several have been raised, or are in progress in this archdeaconry and in that of Bombay; and none of them, perhaps, is more important than one, of which the work is now far advanced, together with a school to be attached to it[1], in a populous quarter of this city; yet I have still to lament the want of chaplains in this part of my diocese. It is something to my individual feeling to be conscious that I have not failed to represent this want as my duty required[2]: this, however, is no alleviation of the public evil; we have considerable bodies of Christians, and those too our own countrymen, who are at this moment without the sacraments or the common offices of religion. Things are, indeed, in some respects worse than at the period of my representation: a vast accession of territory has been naturally the occasion of forming new stations, for which, however, no religious provision, so far as appears, has been made.

On every account, then, both as it respects ourselves and the heathen, ought we to be zealous for the strength, and efficiency, and credit of our establishment. With respect to our own people the case is plain: if Christians any where need a regular ministry, and the public offices of religion, and the checks and restraints which arise from a diligent inculcation of the Word of God, and the appointed means and aids by which divine truth, ever open to the inroads of sciolism, and indifference, and voluptuousness, is maintained in the mind and heart, it is assuredly in India: and with repect to the natives, much as they now hear of our religion, they will look to authority; and if they observe that the church is either weak or supine, deficient in its means, or remiss in its duties, they will draw the obvious conclusion, and act accordingly. The establishment, therefore, must be, if any thing, as the heart or soul of our religious system, from which Christians may derive a warmth and energy, to be gradually diffused by its genial influence amidst all around them.

In what, however, will your zeal consist? The zeal I would recommend is nothing more than what arises out of our solemn engagements; out of the choice which we have made of our profession; out of conviction of the truth of the doc-

[1] *St. James's school* is built out of funds placed at the disposal of the Bishop of Calcutta; especially, a legacy of 500*l.* from the late Captain *Henry Oake*.

[2] See former Charge.

trines to which we have subscribed, and of the authority of the discipline which we have pledged ourselves to maintain; in short, out of the common integrity which disdains to receive the wages of a service not cordially performed and approved.

And how shall it be exercised? I might say briefly, in maintaining its principles, and in exhibiting their connexion with the great work of promoting order and charity in this world, and salvation in another; for this alone is consistent: or if there be any who are zealous for the maintenance of our establishment, without reference to the true object of all establishments, the general well-being of Christians who live under them, they will never, with God's blessing, find in me an apologist. But to speak more distinctly as to the maintenance of what are usually called church principles: there may have been times and places in which it would have been superfluous to enlarge upon such a topic, but I cannot think the exception applicable to the present time, or to the country in which we live. When, in fact, is generally known here upon the subject, or can be known, but by a temperate and discreet inculcation of it? All sects and denominations of Christians among us receive an encouragement and support which is nearly indiscriminate. Little distinction seems to be made in respect of the church, except that it is established by law: it is not sufficiently considered, that such establishment is incidental, not essential to its pretensions: or that its claims to acceptance rest entirely upon its being a true and apostolical branch of the church of Christ. We hold, that all men may not administer the sacraments, or authoritatively expound the Word of God; and if not all, then they only to whom the commission was given or transmitted. In short, following Scripture and the primitive records, we distinguish the church as a society from merely voluntary societies in which they, who would accomplish any purpose, may appoint and create their own officers, and subject themselves to their rule. This distinction will not need to be maintained among those who have attended to the constitution of the church as founded by Christ; but subjects of this kind are not always familiar even to cultivated minds: by some, as we know, all difference in the two cases is openly denied, and the perplexity which they thus occasion they want not the worldly wisdom to turn to their own account.

But, then, what is to be said for charity? for much, no doubt, is due to it; and no conclusions can be right which do not recognize its claims. All apprehensions on this score must surely arise out of misconception, as if charity were associated with laxity of principle, or were even a part of it; the very contrary of which is the fact. Charity is good, and deserves the name so long as we hold it in the truth; but as the truth becomes indifferent to us or doubtful, what we take to be charity loses its virtue as one of the Christian graces, and even its very nature: it is no better than the prodigality of those who give away to any who ask what they themselves do not value. It is preposterous to talk, as some do, of the charity and liberality of men, who hold that all churches and all sects rest upon much the same credentials, though such, no doubt, will be lenient even to the worst of errors. Charity, in the very idea of it, is that which makes some sacrifice: this will hold universally, and, of course, in questions of religion: if it "believeth all things," it is candid in its allowance for early prejudices and disadvantages; which still, however, it considers to be such: if it "hopeth all things," it still feels that much is at present wanting; and if it "endureth all things," it guards against being betrayed into ill-will towards *persons*, while it laments their *principles;* but these sentiments have obviously no place, where there is not in the mind a settled system of what it reveres as truth.

But I have remarked, that our zeal will not be shown to any good purpose in the maintenance of *principles*, if we do not exhibit their efficacy in our *practice*, and their connection with the objects, for which Christ founded his church upon earth: and this leads me to speak to you very briefly, in conclusion, on the subject of your duties. The general character and estimation of the clergy, small as is their number, is still a matter of incalculable importance: and on this, probably, more than on any other cause, the wished-for increase of our establishment, will ultimately depend. Already, as I am well assured, a desire is felt by many of the residents at stations, where there is no chaplain, to have the services and society of a clergyman; though this feeling be not so generally expressed, as perhaps were to be wished. Independently, however, of this circumstance, I must remind you, what duties devolve on those, who are actually employed,

and also who are the objects to be benefited. It should seem, indeed, hardly possible to overrate the importance of a zealous and pious clergy in England: but yet in some measure they seem to be even more needed here. At home, the system by which religion is dispensed through the country, and morals inculcated, and social order maintained, has acquired a momentum: and if they, whose duty it is to keep it in action, should for awhile relax their efforts, it would not immediately stop: but here the system is hardly in operation, we have to communicate to it the first impulse, and to overcome its *inertia*; and the impediments to the establishment of that order, without which nothing considerable can be accomplished, are peculiar and embarrassing: I am entitled thus to speak, when I so deeply feel them. It should be considered, moreover, what classes of persons are frequently the objects of your care: they are not the inhabitants of parishes, as in England, where perhaps there has long been a resident clergyman, where the population is stationary, and among whom religious associations have taken root: but a fluctuating society, with some of whom the very foundations of religion are to be laid. Among the seniors there are many, who arrived in the country when the subject had not attracted much public notice, and who may not since have had frequent opportunities of hearing it discussed, or been prompted to private enquiry: of the juniors, some have experienced neglect in that part of education, however well they may have been qualified for their particular branch of service: and happy are they, if they should here have the means of repairing it. But especially do a large body of soldiery, whose habits cannot be presumed to be religious, call for the unremitting exertions of the chaplain: at a military station, the public service of the church, and the common offices of religion, will be the lightest part of his duty: it is in the hospital, if any where, that he will appear as the messenger of peace, and as an ambassador of Christ. Nor ought I, in any of these Addresses, to overlook the paramount subject of schools: a Christian school for the children of the poor, and in connexion with the church, if well conducted and superintended, is among the most valuable institutions with which this country can be blessed.

You would, then, my Reverend Brethren, exceedingly

mistake your situation, and ill appreciate what it demands of you, if you could for a moment suppose it to be compatible with listlessness and indifference, or one which it is easy adequately to fill. The qualities, in fact, to be desired in the Indian clergy, are such as are not any where commonly found in combination; — sincere and consistent piety, — laborious and patient habits, — a talent of holding Christian conversation with persons of all classes, — a clear and comprehensive view of the evidences of religion, — attachment to order and discipline, — and a competent acquaintance with the history of the church of Christ, and with the constitution of our own: to say nothing of those scriptural attainments, which are every where to be expected in the clergy, though here, from the circumstances of the country, they are more particularly needed. Let me, then, beseech you to measure yourselves by some such standard, and if any fall far short of it, that they endeavour to reach it: I am confident, that it is not taken too high, if here you would really and essentially serve the cause of Christ. But you will not mistake me so far as to suppose, that I would cast you, even in thought, upon your own sufficiency: if the grace of God be ever needed, (and human weakness is the great lesson of human life,) it is surely by ourselves: humanly speaking, every thing is against us; we are called upon to work a change in the habits, the hearts, and the very nature of men, in circumstances of peculiar difficulty, and to build up a Zion unto God in the waste places of the earth. But for these things who is sufficient, unless the Spirit of God be with him? Prayer, therefore, habitual prayer, is to you and to myself the only resource; prayer that God will enlighten and strengthen us, and fill our hearts with the love of Christ, and zeal for His glory, and enable us to give an account of the souls committed to us, in the hope of mercy on our own.

AN

ADDRESS

TO

THE CHILDREN OF THE SEVERAL SCHOOLS

IN CALCUTTA,

WHO WERE CATECHISED IN THE CATHEDRAL

DURING LENT 1817.

DELIVERED

On Wednesday in Passion-Week,

BY THOMAS FANSHAW,

BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

ADDRESS

TO

THE CHILDREN OF THE SCHOOLS IN CALCUTTA.

CHILDREN BELOVED IN JESUS CHRIST;

You are now to be dismissed for the present season, from further attendance in this place, for the purpose of being questioned and instructed in the Catechism: but I am so well satisfied with your general progress, and with the answers which most of you have given to the questions put to you by your ministers, respecting the meaning of what you have been taught, that I wish for your encouragement to notice it thus publicly, and to express to you my approbation. I consider you, indeed, though a small, yet an important part of my charge: my interest in your behalf is greatly excited by your tender age: our blessed faith is never more amiable than when its holy truths are heard to proceed from the lips of the young: "God," we read, "hath out of the mouths of babes and sucklings perfected praise:" (Matt. xxi. 16.) His merciful dealing with a fallen race is never more visible, than in leading children to feel their dependence upon Him, to supplicate his protection, to endeavour to learn his will, and thus to lay the foundation of their future welfare, both temporal and eternal. I will then, with God's blessing, without which neither you nor I can do any good thing, offer you some admonitions, relating to the work in which we have been engaged: and this it is my wish to do in the plainest language and most familiar way, that so you may all of you, with the exception perhaps of the very young, be able to understand me.

You have said in repeating the Catechism, that "you heartily thank your Heavenly Father for having called you to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ your Saviour: and that you pray unto God to give you his grace, that you may continue in the same unto your lives' end." In these words so much is contained, and it is so easy at your time of life to repeat them without fully considering what they mean, that I am anxious to impress them in all their force on your understandings and your hearts; being convinced, that if you perfectly comprehend them, and deeply feel all which they are intended to convey, you will, with God's help, learn to love the Gospel of Christ, and be constantly thankful to God for having given you a knowledge of it, and will not fail regularly and unceasingly to pray for the assistance of His Holy Spirit, to keep you in the way, unto which God's mercy hath called you.

You say, then, that you thank your Heavenly Father, for "having called you to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ." Now let me desire you, my good children, to consider what these words mean. It is very plain from them, that by having been baptized, you were brought into a state of salvation; for when you speak of *this* state of salvation, you mean the state in which you were placed at your baptism. You had not been speaking of any thing else, but still you may not have considered what such a state of salvation means. Let me remind you, then, that by nature you were not placed in a state, in which we have any assurance of God that men should be saved and brought unto life eternal. The Scripture has revealed to us, that the fall, as it is called, occasioned by the perverseness and disobedience of our first parents, whom God had created to innocence and happiness, has entirely altered the condition of mankind: it has reduced them to a state of misery and ruin: their natural lot is now sin and death: the heart of man is become corrupt, and is strongly inclined to evil; and the natural consequence of evil is the anger of a just and righteous God. You must not suppose, that any of us are by nature in a better condition, than that which I have described to you. "The Scripture," as St. Paul remarks, "hath concluded all under sin," (Gal. iii. 22.) that is to say, it has taught us, that we are all to be considered, as being by nature in a sinful state, and that we

can only expect to be dealt with accordingly. And in another place he tells us, (1 Cor. xv. 22.) that "in Adam all die;" meaning, that through the corruption of our nature derived from Adam, which inclines us to sin, we have all become subject to death; and that it is through Christ alone, through what he has done for us, and our being permitted to partake in its benefits, that we can any of us hope to be "made alive."

When you say, then, that you thank God "for having called you to this state of salvation through Christ" by baptism, which is a sacrament ordained by Christ himself, and blessed by Him, as we trust to the purpose for which he ordained it, you mean to thank God for having taken you from the miserable condition, into which you were actually born: you mean to thank him for having snatched you from impending ruin, and embraced you with the arms of his mercy. You acknowledge that he has placed you in a state, in which you have been saved from the danger of the past, and *may* be saved from all future dangers, if it be not your own fault. The state, into which you have been thus admitted, gives you very great advantages: it has brought you into covenant with God: you have become more immediately His children: you are made partakers of His grace: the state in which you are placed, leads you to a knowledge of your duty, and offers you assistance in the performance of it; and it gives you an interest in the benefits arising from Christ's death: so that if you steadfastly believe in Him, and show your love of Him by keeping His commandments, (John xiv. 15.) you will be found at the last day in the number of those, who have been saved by His precious blood.

But it often happens, that the best way of explaining any thing, especially to young people, is by illustration or similitude. You are all acquainted with the history of the flood or deluge, and the manner in which Noah and his family were saved in the ark. The service, which was used at the time of your being baptized, speaks of your being "admitted into the ark of Christ's church:" this similitude is borrowed from Holy Scripture: (1 Pet. iii. 20.) and there cannot, perhaps, be a better way of conveying to your minds, what it is, for which you profess to be thankful. We read in the history of the deluge, that "all flesh had corrupted his way

upon the earth;" (Gen. vi. 12.) but that notwithstanding, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord:" (Gen. vi. 8.) he and his family were admitted into the ark, and escaped destruction from those waters, which swallowed up the rest of the world. — Another similitude, which was used upon the same occasion, and is also borrowed from Scripture, (1 Cor. x. 2.) is that of the passage of the children of Israel through the Red Sea, which is said to "figure baptism:" for though the sea was "on their right hand and on their left," and destroyed the whole host of Pharaoh, yet the Israelites went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground. (Exod. xiv. 22.)

You see, then, Christian children, how the merciful providence of God can deliver us in the midst of the greatest dangers, when we conform ourselves to his will and follow his guidance: but no dangers are so great, as those which assail the *souls* of men; and it is from these, and not from any harm which may hurt the body, that your Saviour offers to deliver you, and to conduct you through "the waves of a troublesome world." Having called you to baptism, he has received you into the ark of his church: but do not suppose, that you have therefore nothing to do on your own part, or that because you have been called to a *state* of salvation, you are therefore actually *saved*. This would be a fatal mistake; it is no such thing: God has called you to a state, in which there are many *helps* to salvation, if they be duly applied and used; and in which you may assuredly be saved, if you heartily *desire* and earnestly *strive* after salvation; but nothing more. God hath taken you under his protection; He has received you into the ark, but you yourselves may make his mercy to be of none effect: he, who is admitted into the strongest ship, is liable to perish in a thousand ways, while the ship itself sustains no harm: and we know, that though the children of Israel passed the Red Sea without any loss, yet that many of them afterwards offended God, and "were overthrown in the wilderness." (1 Cor. x. 5.) Nothing, but the continual grace of God, can save you from the like disasters: the voyage of life is before you: you have still a wide wilderness to pass, before you can reach the promised land: yet the same Divine Mercy, which has thus far favoured you, especially in making you members of the church of Christ,

may and will be prevailed upon, by continual supplication for Christ's sake, to preserve you in a state of salvation unto your lives' end. But this leads me to explain to you what is meant, when you are taught to answer, that you pray to God, that he will give you His grace, that you may be thus preserved.

You are to know, then, my good children, that unless the same Almighty Being who has called you to baptism, and has watched over the years of your helpless infancy, and who has brought you up thus far in his "nurture and admonition," still continue his goodness towards you, all which has been done, will be lost: you will be no better for it, and you may even be the worse: for God will judge us all by the *advantages* which he has afforded us; and he who throws them away, will be brought to a much severer account than he who never had them. You ask, then, for the grace of God: may you never cease to use this prayer! and to this end consider what that grace is, and how much you need it. I have already spoken to you of the corruption of our nature, as strongly inclining us to evil: and how many temptations and inducements to evil present themselves in the world! At your tender age you cannot be acquainted with a thousandth part of them: and I pray that the Almighty may never suffer you to be exposed to any severe trials: yet it is but right to put you upon your guard, and to give you notice of the dangers which threaten you. Already, indeed, you are aware, that even children are very apt, and are often tempted to do what is wrong: they are sometimes addicted to improper language, to falsehood, to ingratitude, to cruelty, and to bad habits of different kinds; all of which shew you, that even children cannot do what is right, without the grace of God. But if this be the case at your time of life, when the corruption of your nature has not acquired its full strength, and you are under the guidance and control of persons, who are constantly endeavouring to keep you in the right way, you may well imagine, that you will be exposed to much greater danger, when you enter into the world: you will then probably be left much more to yourselves, and you will have least of direction and advice, when you shall need it most; you will meet with people, who perhaps were never taught to think much upon God and the concerns of the

soul; and the little, which they learnt in their childhood, they will have nearly forgotten. You will find them living without any appearance of religion; and given up to such habits and practices as usually follow, when men think of nothing but the present life. Such persons you should endeavour to avoid: but yet in the actual condition of the world, this may not always be possible. Every man may, indeed, choose his particular friends and companions; and he will generally fix upon such as most nearly resemble himself: but hardly any one is so independent, as not to be obliged to have constant dealings, and to be much in company with persons, whose lives and opinions he very much disapproves. They are, perhaps, fellow-labourers, who are joined with him in the same duties; or they may even be connected with him by still nearer ties, and be of his own kindred. Thus, then, it may be your misfortune to be daily exposed to the influence of bad example; from the effects of which no one can be long preserved, unless good principles have been deeply planted in his mind, and his resolution be much stronger than it can be by nature: from such influence nothing can save you, but the more powerful influence of the grace of God. Wicked advice is not half so dangerous as wicked example; and in general it has little effect, till wicked example has prepared us to receive it. You would be offended and shocked, perhaps, by being at once advised to commit a crime: but you could hardly need to be advised to it, when you had been accustomed to see the crime committed by others, and especially by those with whom you were in any way connected. You would fall into the same habits, almost without knowing it; and when you had once contracted them, you would feel but little uneasiness under them, and might never think of shaking them off. So great is the danger from bad example.

But besides the perils, to which you will be exposed from the wickedness of others, you have almost as much to dread from yourselves: you may not understand what I mean. Recollect, then, what I said to you of the naturally evil dispositions of the heart. You feel, perhaps, and may think that you shall always feel, a desire to be good and happy; and so long as you shall really desire it, and ask God's blessing to assist you, you will be in little danger: but how easily do such desires give way to others of a different kind! Men

are apt to think that they may be happy without being good, or even endeavouring to be so: they think that riches will make them happy, or the being great and admired, or indulging themselves in luxury, pleasure, and intemperance: and the moment they form these notions, they begin to drive away from their minds all thoughts of God. They soon forget to "commit their works unto the Lord," according to the advice of Solomon, "that their thoughts may be established," (Prov. xvi. 3.) or to pray to Him, that His "will may be done:" (Matt. vi. 10.) They set up their own will against that of God; and if they do not *pray*, (for they may not have *so* much folly and presumption,) they secretly *wish* that their *own* will may be done: and thus quitting the guidance of Him, who alone can know what is really good for us, they follow their own inventions and imaginations, and never find out, till perhaps it is too late, that these do not lead to any real happiness. You are all of you, I am aware, too young to see that this is the true state of the case: you cannot at present really know how deceitful the heart is, and how men are misled to their ruin: but you are most of you old enough to have observed, that those who are older than yourselves, know a great deal more than yourselves; and when you have every reason to believe that they wish you well, you should earnestly listen to their warning voice, and be thankful.

The danger, then, of which I have been speaking, is not so much from evil example, though that will greatly increase it, as it is from yourselves; from the evil principles and wicked desires which lurk in every breast, unless they be subdued and driven away by Divine grace. A man, who lives apart from the world, (which few persons, however, have the means of doing, nor is it to be desired that they should,) if he be ill disposed, may be as wicked, though he cannot be so mischievous, as if he lived in a large society. He will do less harm to others, but may do quite as much to himself: he may live in utter forgetfulness of God, neither thanking him for any benefits he has received, nor trusting to him for protection, nor performing any acts of kindness and charity to his neighbours, but caring only for his own ease and indulgence, as if he had not a soul, which required to be saved. Men may fall into this dreadful state, without being misled by bad advice, or seduced by bad example: it is quite

enough, that they once fall into a habit of disregarding God, and forsake their only all-powerful Friend; for if we forsake him, he will also forsake us, and leave us to the natural consequences of our own folly and ingratitude.

I now hope, that what has been said, has been sufficient to show you, that there is the greatest necessity for praying, as you do, that God would keep you in this state of salvation. You see how easily you may fall away from it: you are not safe for a day nor an hour, unless God should watch over you, and shield you from harm: from without and from within you are exposed to danger: your natural dispositions are directly contrary to your duties. You may compare life to a river, upon which you are required to proceed towards its fountain-head or source: naturally the current carries you downward; but you are required to struggle against it, and to overcome it; which, however, you cannot do, without great strength and unceasing efforts. So also will you find it in your Christian course: if you are not supplied with sufficient strength;—if you are not constantly encouraged to exert it;—if you are not supported and refreshed under your fatigues;—if you are not cautioned against the rocks and shoals which lie in your way;—and if you are not animated with the hope of finally attaining your object, you will make no progress, but will rather go back. But this strength, this encouragement, this refreshing support, this providential protection, and this animating hope, are all of them, my dear children, from God: they are all of them but so many different ways, in which his Holy Spirit carries us through temptations, and trials, and sorrows, and enabling us to overcome the world and our own hearts, conducts us to the source of life and happiness, even unto God.

What is it, then, which I would have you to do? I would have you to pray constantly and earnestly for God's grace and for such assistances as those which I have just described; and let me assure you, that prayer, sincere and humble, yet earnest prayer, is the only way of obtaining them: our blessed Saviour has taught and commanded all men to pray; and no good thing will be given to those who will not ask it. I have no doubt, that all of you, at your several schools, have morning and evening prayers: but let me entreat you not to regard them as a matter of form, and still less as a task.

Consider what they really mean: if you do not understand them, desire to have them explained to you; and then you will be qualified to join in them with all your hearts and souls. It is thus that by God's grace you will acquire good dispositions, and grow up in them: you will gradually feel the comforts of religion: it will make you contented and happy, whatever be the station to which God may call you: and while so many are growing up in the practice of vice and wickedness, *you* will be learning every day to fear and to love God, and to conform yourselves to his will, and to trust to his mercy, through Christ. With such habits early formed, and growing continually stronger under the fostering influence of your Heavenly Father, you will live and die in that state of salvation, to which he hath called you, and be forgiven all your sins, and be happy for evermore with your Saviour.

If Providence should spare my life another year, I purpose to hold my second Confirmation in this place: and I shall expect that many of you, who appear already to be of sufficient age, will avail yourselves of such an opportunity, and take upon you your baptismal vows. What is more particularly intended by that rite, and what you will be required to know and to do, you will be told in sufficient time; and every assistance will be afforded you. For the present let me only desire you, my good children, to attend to and to remember my advice: pray unto God, and endeavour to live in that state of mind and heart, which prayer supposes and requires;—shun and detest every bad habit;—do nothing which you know or believe to be wrong:—be dutiful and affectionate to your parents and friends, obedient to your teachers, reverent to your ministers, grateful to those who do you any service, or even wish you well, and kind one to another, and to all with whom you have any concern: but in this and in every good purpose, you will still recollect, that you must pray for help from God.

Before I conclude, I should acknowledge to the masters and mistresses of the several schools my high satisfaction with the regular and numerous attendance of the young people, as well as with the pains which must have been taken to produce so much proficiency: though I doubt not that their own gratification in the result has been felt by them to be no light reward, and it certainly must far surpass in value any

human commendation. After this proof of their attention to the subject, it would be superfluous to detain them with reflections upon the vast importance of the religious instruction of youth: it is plain that they have not fallen into any of the prevailing errors upon this point, but are fully sensible that the only method, upon which any reliance can be placed, of bringing men generally to the knowledge and practice of the Gospel, is to train them in its principles while they are young. The summary of Christian faith and duty in which the pupils have now been instructed, is excellently adapted to the purpose: it explains the mode and the terms of their admission into the covenant of grace: it sets before them what God has required them to believe, and has commanded them to do: it teaches the most perfect form of prayer; and it enters into the subject of the Christian sacraments, as far as is suited to the capacities of the young. The Church Catechism is, therefore, an epitome of Christian knowledge: and young persons possessing that comprehensive acquaintance with it, which some of the pupils have shown, are well prepared for any further pursuit of religious studies, to which the blessing of God may lead them, while they are already provided with the best preservative against vice and irreligion, which human care can supply. I beseech the teachers, then, to persevere in this salutary course of duty, not doubting that He "who giveth the increase," will crown their labours with abundant fruits. Their pupils, we may hope, will thus become a comfort to their friends, and to all with whom they are now, or may hereafter be connected; and their temporal and eternal welfare will be most effectually advanced: but the good, which will be done, may not rest there: in the present state of this country, if there be any thing which may be expected, with the blessing of God, to produce extensive effects, it is to be sought in the steady piety and Christian habits of the comparatively few, who have happily been called to a state of salvation, through Jesus Christ.

A PRAYER,

WHICH MAY BE SAID BY A CHILD AT ANY TIME.

ALMIGHTY God, my Heavenly Father, I fall down before thee to thank thee for thy goodness, which has preserved me through my helpless infancy to the present day: but especially, that thou hast called me to a state of salvation, through Christ my Saviour, and hast given me a knowledge of my duty, and hast taught me to approach thee in prayer. O Lord, make me ever to know and to feel, that I am naturally corrupt and sinful, and that I can do no good thing but through thy merciful assistance. Do thou, then, by thy Holy Spirit, vouchsafe to be present with me, and to succour me, while I shall live. In my childhood direct my thoughts to thee, my Creator and Protector: suffer me not to fall into wicked habits, or to indulge in any wicked thought: turn away from me whatever may endanger my salvation: teach me to dread thy displeasure, and to seek thy favour above every thing which the world can bestow: suffer me not to be corrupted and seduced by evil example, and deliver me from those temptations, which might lead me into sin. And if it shall please thy providence to preserve me beyond these the days of my childhood, grant that in every succeeding year I may grow in grace and in the knowledge of my Lord and Saviour, in the faith of a Christian, and in the practice of whatever is acceptable in thy sight, until it seem good to thee to call me away from this mortal state: and then receive me, O Lord, unto thyself, forgiving me all my sins, through the only merits of Him, who died for the sins of the world, Jesus Christ, my Redeemer. *Amen.*

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO

THE PERSONS CONFIRMED AT THE TRIENNIAL CONFIRMATION,

HOLDEN IN

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CALCUTTA,

A. D. MDCCCXVIII.

By THOMAS FANSHAW,

BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

AN

ADDRESS, &c.

BELOVED IN JESUS CHRIST,

ON an occasion like the present, when you have been engaged in one of the most solemn acts of your lives, and your hearts may be supposed to be sensible to all the impressions connected with it, I cannot but avail myself of the opportunity, before I dismiss you, of offering you a few words of affectionate admonition. None of you, I trust, after having been presented to me as duly prepared to receive confirmation, can need any further instruction as to the meaning and object of this rite. You all of you know, that you came hither to ratify, in your own persons, the vows made for you at your baptism, and to bind yourselves here in the presence of the church, to believe and to do whatever was promised for you, when you could not promise for yourselves: and in this holy work, as the appointed minister of the ordinance, I have invoked on you the Divine blessing, and have endeavoured to assist you with my prayers. All these things you know: but what we know and understand, we do not always sufficiently feel; we do not suffer it to sink into our hearts: we do not stop to reflect upon it; we are content to understand it: and we act, as if nothing more were required.

My object, then, in thus addressing you, is to prevail upon you, if happily by God's assistance this may be done, to consider deeply and seriously within yourselves, how much you will have to answer for before God, if you do not earnestly endeavour to fulfil the solemn engagement into which you have this day entered: if you treat what has been done as a form or ceremony, in which your hearts have no participation. I hope better things of you: and I pray that God may render this work, which cannot be considered as a ceremony, conducive to your eternal salvation.

Reflect, I beseech you, that you have this day personally entered into covenant with your Maker: you have bound yourselves to certain conditions, on which alone through Christ you hope for his mercy: you have virtually declared, that *unless* you shall renounce the devil and all his works: that *unless* you shall believe the articles of the Christian faith, and *unless* you shall keep God's commandments, you cannot ordinarily hope for his favour, however after failing in any of these points you may obtain forgiveness by repentance: you acknowledge, indeed, that it is only through the merits of your Redeemer, that the best services of your faith and obedience will be accepted: but you also acknowledge, that these services are entirely due, and you solemnly pledge yourselves to offer them, praying to God for help.

Seeing then, beloved, that you have made an engagement to this effect, with that great and awful Being, "who is not mocked," (Gal. vi. 7.) and "who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell," (Matt. x. 28.) let me offer you a few words of advice, in the plainest manner I am able.

I. In the first place, let me suggest a few hints upon the subject of *good resolutions*. If ever we can be supposed to resolve upon our conduct for the future, it will probably be at the time of, or previously to confirmation: but in what way are good resolutions formed? We seem sometimes to make them, when in fact we do nothing more than feel a momentary uneasiness respecting our condition. We are conscious that all is not right within us: we perceive that our lives do not accord with the law of God: we are convinced that we cannot hope for his favour without great amendment; and that the course we are pursuing must, in the end, make us miserable. People, who entertain, though it be but for a moment, such thoughts as these, easily persuade themselves, that they have made resolutions, which will entirely alter their future habits and course of life, and carry them safely through dangers and temptations. But let me assure you, that if your resolves go no further than this, they will avail you nothing. All that has past within you is the mere *commencement* of the work: you have not resolved upon amendment: you have merely reflected in a transient way, that amendment is required. How, then, shall I counsel you in this momentous crisis? The counsel of man is unavailing, if

it move you not to seek the Divine assistance; to cast yourselves on the Divine mercy: and to surrender your hearts and wills and wishes to the Divine disposal: to resolve without the grace of God is as vain, as the attempt to stem a torrent without muscular strength, or to fly without wings: it is to say, that we will surmount insuperable difficulties. We know from the apostle, that "it is God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure:" (Phil. ii. 13.) And we are also assured, that he will "give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him." (Luke xi. 13.)

To form good resolutions, therefore, is not merely, as some of you may imagine, to think seriously on the subject of amendment, but it is in humble and hearty prayer to give ourselves up unto God: to beseech him to subdue within us every evil desire and propensity, to strengthen whatever is good and holy, and to be evermore our Father, our Guide, and our Comforter; so to influence our wills, that they may accord with *his* will, and that our affections may be weaned from the world, and amidst the changes and chances of life be fixed upon a happier existence. To form good resolutions, is to abhor and renounce all that is evil within us, beseeching God to give us strength to struggle through all our trials, and finally to overcome the world through faith in Christ. All resolutions, which come short of this, are vain and fruitless, and serve only to delude you into a belief that you have done something in the work of your salvation, when in truth you have done nothing.

II. But, in the second place, let me caution you against the notion, that the best resolutions (and many such, I trust, have been formed this day) are at all to be relied upon, unless they are continually *renewed*. Let me advise you to consider the business of religion, and of all that relates to it, as one, in which your diligence must never be relaxed. As well might you expect that the body should be kept in health and vigour without a daily supply of food, as that religion can be maintained in the soul without the constant succours of Divine grace. You must, therefore, live in uninterrupted intercourse with God: you must be regular in the habit of prayer: you must not suffer the morning or the evening to pass without asking help and imploring forgiveness: without acknowledging past mercies, and deploring your own unworthiness

Whenever men forget to pray, they evidently forget God and themselves; they forget his power, his goodness, his right to their prayers: and, on the other hand, their own dependence, their wants, and their duties. To forget to pray, is to forget what it is most important to us to remember, that we "live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii. 28.) in God, and have no hope of happiness, either temporal or eternal, but through his mercy. But perhaps it will be found, that they who have ever been accustomed to regular prayer, never *forget* this duty, till they have frequently allowed themselves to omit it, on some frivolous pretence of wanting time for its due performance. It is certainly desirable to enjoy leisure, and retirement, and composure of mind, to enter into full communion with God; but where men want these opportunities, he will doubtless accept their shortest prayers, provided they ask with fervour for such things as their welfare really demands. It is not the *length* of our prayers so much, as the *frequency*, to which we should attend. But the want of *leisure* to pray is a pretence, which you should never allow to divert you from this duty. Such a plea, when offered by persons who find time for every thing else, must be highly offensive to God, and can never have any foundation in truth. What is every day, which dawns upon us, but a portion of that life, which is given us by our Creator? And what are the duties and occupations which can claim our attention to the exclusion of prayer? Of acknowledgment to him, who has assigned us our duties, and who alone can bless our occupations, and without whom the former have in truth no object, and the latter no use? But it is difficult to suppose a case, in which, if you deeply feel the obligation, you may not offer your devotions to God. If all other seclusion is denied you, you have probably the retirement of your place of rest; or in circumstances the most unfavourable, where privacy is impossible, there is nothing which can restrain your secret aspirations unto Him, "which seeth in secret." (Matt. vi. 6.) Let me advise you, then, to resolve, but not to *rest* upon your resolves, as having in themselves any permanent strength: the best are good and availing, only when they are connected with a habit of regular prayer. When this is neglected, from whatever cause, be assured that religion is losing its influence over you: its duties have become irksome, or, at least, indif-

ferent: whereas they ought to be, and really are, to all who love God, comfortable and delightful. Let every neglect, then, of prayer, be regarded by you as a certain proof of a decay of actual piety; as a proof that the pleasures or the cares of the world are gaining an ascendancy in your hearts, which nothing can prevent from being fully established, but your return to the practice which you have forsaken. Commencing and concluding every day of your life with prayer, and this with all sincerity of purpose and humility of heart, though still you will be far from perfection, you will be living unto God: the purpose of the morning and the retrospect of the evening will embrace the hours that intervene; and the piety of the one, and the penitence of the other, will impart a measure of sanctity to every passing day.

III. But while I am speaking of prayer, let me, in the third place, remind you, that, as Christians, cherishing a zeal for the name and honour of Christ, and also for the welfare of your fellow-men, you will not content yourselves with any measure of retired and secret devotion. This is one of the things which must be done, while other things must not be left undone. (Matt. xxiii. 23.) Let no attention to private prayer seem to excuse you from attendance on the *service of the church*. You will sometimes, indeed, hear it said, without thought or meaning, that you may pray as fervently at home. Whoever tells you this, will tell you what indeed is true, and may yet, if you listen to him, lead you into a fatal error. They who talk in this manner, cannot surely understand the design and the use of public worship. Do they consider, that when we meet together in the church, we not only are acting as becomes Christians in their individual capacity, but we are professing (what it is important for others to know) our faith in Christ? Our religion could not be maintained among men without public assemblies. What effect can be produced upon others, by the secret prayers of the most devout, or how can it be known, that they are offered? What distinction is there, visible to the world, between those, who pass the hours assigned for the service of the church, in pious and secret meditation, or in secular studies and pursuits? All that can be known is, that they are of the number of those who, contrary to the Apostle's injunction, "forsake the assembling of themselves

together," (Heb. x. 25.) and few will doubt that secular business is the cause. But the public profession of our faith is by no means the only object of public worship; it conduces to brotherly love and charity: it not only brings together the high and the low in the presence of Him who is the maker of both, (Prov. xxii. 2.) but it connects by closer ties the pastor and his flock; it keeps up a sense of Christian order: it has a peculiar blessing from Christ, who has promised to be in the midst of those who are gathered together in his name: (Matt. xviii. 20.) and without it the doctrines of the Gospel could not be effectually taught, or men be admonished of their duties. Be assured, therefore, that there is no substitute for regular attendance on the service of the church; it has its distinct and proper uses: and you should consider yourselves as not being alive to the interests of Christianity, or actuated by benevolence to your brethren, if you can be absent from the public worship, where it may be had, without regret and sorrow: you should feel that you have lost one opportunity, (and you know not how few may be vouchsafed you) of promoting the glory of God, your own improvement, and the welfare of your fellowmen.

IV. But, fourthly, there is another subject, to which it is at this moment peculiarly proper that I should draw your attention. You are now permitted by the rubric of the church to partake of the *sacrament of the Lord's supper:* let me urge you, therefore, to avail yourselves of that privilege as soon as may be, and henceforward to your lives' end to be frequent in your attendance at the table of your Redeemer. Recollect that this is a solemn ordinance instituted by Christ himself, and imposed on all Christians without exception; and which, therefore, would be binding on us all, though we saw but very indistinctly its design and benefits. But this is by no means the case: nothing is better understood by us than the intent and the uses of this holy sacrament. If there be any doctrine of our religion more prominent than all others, it is that of the atonement made by Christ for human guilt; in truth, this doctrine is so important, that all others centre in it. Religion is but the method of salvation, and we are saved through the merits of Christ. Now to this great doctrine of atonement and redemption, the sacrament immediately refers; being

ordained to perpetuate, by a solemn and affecting rite, the remembrance of the death of Christ, to impress us with the horrence of sin, which has required to be expiated by the sacrifice of the Son of God, and so move us to sentiments of adoration and praise for this wondrous act of love. The Lord's supper, therefore, though among the highest and holiest of the mysteries connected with our religion, is yet plain and practical in its uses, and may be brought, in this respect, within the compass of the humblest understanding. Do we really rest our hopes of salvation on the merits of Christ? We have no other ground of confidence: but yet we can hardly have a lively sense of the efficacy of the atonement, we may even be suspected of trusting in "the broken reed" (Jer. xxxvi. 6.) of our own deservings, if we habitually neglect this expression of our faith in Christ. It seems not to be natural, that any of us, who really rest our hopes of salvation on the sacrifice of the cross, and who consider our best performances as acceptable to God only through Christ, should be backward in signifying that such are our hopes, and in seeking to be strengthened in this faith. But the sacrament is not confined to a mere commemoration of the death of Christ, nor to a "shewing of the Lord's death till he come," (1 Cor. xi. 26.) It draws down upon us, when worthily received, fresh supplies of grace: it calls us frequently to the important business of self-examination and repentance: it moves us to new resolutions, or it strengthens those already made; and it brings us together on terms of mutual charity and love: so that all the great objects of our religion seem to be combined in this benevolent and simple institution. Be not deceived, then, by the excuses of the many, who are seen to neglect it: there cannot be any *sufficient* reason for disobeying the command of Christ. If any, indeed, are living in the practice of deliberate sin, they are unfit to approach the sacred table: but with this consciousness of their infirmity, why do they not repent? What will it avail them in the day of judgment, that though they did not profane the sacrament, yet they would not prepare themselves to receive it? You will endeavour, therefore, through the grace of God, to avoid all habits, and that course of conduct, which may involve you in these perplexities and dangers: following the precepts which I have now given you, you can never have cause to

hesitate in a matter of so much importance. The best, indeed, should approach with humility and a sense of their own unworthiness: but humility is quite distinct from despair; and a sense of unworthiness can be productive of no good, when we seek not to lessen it, and to render ourselves, though still very imperfect, yet acceptable to God through Christ.

V. Another topic of importance to you, who are setting out in life, is the forming of *connexions* and *friendships*: much of your happiness in this world may depend upon it, and still more in the next. Where good principles are deeply fixed and matured by years, there is little need of this caution: men of irreligious and wicked habits are so offensive to those of a contrary character, that no intercourse is likely to subsist between them, beyond what arises from necessity. But this is not the case with the young. There is an easiness of temper and a warmth of heart at that early period, which are easily won by the first offers of friendship or kindness: and the vivacity natural at that time of life brings persons into habits of intimacy, between whom, perhaps, except in vivacity, there is really but little resemblance. Now here I would put you on your guard: it will be your duty to be courteous to all; but form no intimacies, where you have not reason to believe, that there is some foundation at least of Christian principles, and still less, where you observe the want of them in vicious acts or dispositions. It is almost impossible, that in such society your good resolutions should not be forgotten, and your religious habits impaired. You will find them perhaps ridiculed, but at any rate discouraged: and if there be any thing which can endanger your religious condition, it will be the constant, though silent influence of bad example.

VI. But, in the last place, let me close these few admonitions, with exhorting you to cultivate, according to your means and opportunities, *religious knowledge*. I do not forget that I am addressing persons of very different degrees of education, and destined to very different stations of life: but I would urge you all without exception to improve yourselves by reading, and to endeavour to extend your knowledge of Christian doctrines and duties beyond those rudiments, which the present solemnity requires. *A Bible*, a *Prayer Book*, a *Preparation for the Sacrament*, and a few plain *Helps* to *Piety* and

Christian Knowledge, seem to be indispensable to all of you; and those, who cannot afford to purchase them, may probably be supplied *gratuitously*, with a part of them at least, out of the stores of the *Diocesan Committee*, by application to me through the clergyman, from whom they received their ticket. Religion will be better practised and be more endeared to you, the more fully you understand it: and, indeed, in this country especially, ought we to be acquainted with the excellence, and to cherish the profession of our faith. How many of you may be thrown into situations, in which the manners and habits of those around you will not contribute to establish you in the good principles, in which you have been brought up! On the contrary, you may meet with open and avowed indifference on the subject of religion; and your lot may even be cast, where its solemnities and decencies are wholly unknown. But in more favourable circumstances, there is much which should put you on your guard. Various modes and forms of faith are practised around us, all of them with apparent sincerity, and confidence that they are pleasing to God: and the effect of this upon Christians, is, I fear, not unfrequently, however unobserved by them, that they forget how destitute of Divine sanction is all which they behold; that Christ only "hath the words of eternal life:" (John vi. 68.) that "He is the true light, which lighteth every man, "that cometh into the world;" (John i. 9.) and that they who have not seen that light are still in darkness. Let me caution you, then, beloved, against indifference; and not less against that distraction of mind, which seems to see much good in every thing bearing the name of religion, and settles at last in nothing. Hold fast your faith without wavering, according to that "form of sound words," (2 Tim. i. 13.) which ye have received: and when you observe the thousands around you worshipping the works of their own hands, and seeking the atonement of sin in some vain and childish superstition, O bless the Being, who hath called you to this state of salvation through faith in Christ; applying those words of the Psalmist, "This God is our God for ever and ever:—He shall be our guide unto death." (Ps. xlviii. 13.)

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED TO

THE PERSONS CONFIRMED AT THE TRIENNIAL CONFIRMATION,

HOLDEN IN

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT CALCUTTA,

On the 18th Day of December, 1821.

By THOMAS FANSHAW,

BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

AN

ADDRESS, &c.

BELOVED IN CHRIST,

You have come before me generally for the purpose of ratifying your baptismal vows; and this all of you have done, though not placed in precisely the same circumstances. You consist, for the most part, of young persons, who are just entering on the period of life, when they must begin to act for themselves: while some of you are of maturer age, although for want of opportunity, or from other causes, you have not, till now, made a public profession of your Christian engagements. In the case of the former, much gratitude is due to the zeal of their pastors, and to the affectionate solicitude of their parents and friends: and with respect to the latter, I cannot but rejoice, that their own conviction and sense of duty, and their readiness to conform with the order of the church, have led them to repair their past neglect, or, it may be, to avail themselves of a benefit, which had hitherto been denied them. It is, indeed, most fit and reasonable, that all Christians should, as soon as possible, after they attain to years of discretion, come forward in the face of the church to avow themselves members of Christ, to acknowledge and ratify their Christian engagements, and to pledge themselves, by God's grace, to persevere in that course of faith and obedience, which those engagements imply: nor is it to be considered as altogether unimportant, that we call down upon them the succours of the Holy Spirit in the manner prescribed by the example of the apostles, and with all the sincerity and fervour compatible with the weakness and unworthiness of those whose duty it has since become to administer this holy rite.

But different as your circumstances may be, not only in point of age, but of education, connexions, and prospects in life, the solemnity, in which we have been engaged, affords me the opportunity of offering to all of you a few words of

exhortation. They ought, indeed, to be adapted more especially to the condition of the younger part of you, as the objects more immediately contemplated on the present occasion; and, in charity, perhaps to *those* among them, who seem designed by Providence for the humbler walks of life: yet to none of you, I trust, will they be found altogether inapplicable. Amidst all the differences created by our respective conditions in life, we stand in the same relation to God, and look unto the same Redeemer; and as for those of you, of whatever class or rank, who may have passed the period of early youth, your time will not be misspent in receiving wholesome counsel: if you are in the right way, it may happily encourage you to persevere; and if otherwise, you are called upon to consider; to pray unto God, that He will forgive and obliterate from his remembrance all that is amiss in you, and permit you under happier circumstances to begin life again. No opportunity will ever occur more favourable than the present: nor do I despair, that the counsel, which I shall offer to those who hear me, though of necessity it will be general, will, by the divine blessing, be brought home to the hearts of all by particular and individual application.

I will not, then, suppose, that you have not, according to the measure of your understandings, deeply reflected on the work, which you have had in hand. I have confidence in those, whose duty it has been to prepare you for this holy ordinance, that they would not have suffered you to present yourselves in a state of ignorance as to the principles of our holy faith, or without instructing you in the nature, and impressing you with the benefits of confirmation. Still I ought not to doubt, that the effect already produced on your minds may be encreased, at a moment of such interest as the present: religion is a practical thing: it may indeed be made *intelligible* to those, who will not join in its solemnities; but its actual exercises give it life and energy; they awaken the feelings, and warm the heart; and in the whole course of the Christian life there is not any religious exercise better adapted to this end, than that in which you have now been engaged. Consider, I beseech you, what has really taken place: having attained to years of discretion, and being brought to understand the method devised by a merciful God for the salvation of sinners, in which number all that live are included, you

have here assembled to a make a public profession of your faith in the Redeemer, and to pledge yourselves to fight under his banners, as long as you shall live. But what is it to be a soldier of Christ? It is to engage in an unceasing warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil; against every thing which may entice you to sin and forgetfulness of your Saviour; and to live in holiness of habit and purity of heart, in the love of God, and in faith in a Redeemer, and to regulate your views and actions and desires by the standard of the gospel. And this profession has been made by you at a time of life, when the heart is susceptible of deep impressions, and by all of you, I would hope, before it has been greatly polluted by the corruptions of the world. Surely, then, I cannot err, in believing, that many of you are seriously affected with what has passed; that you consider yourselves as now entering on another state of life; that childhood with its ignorance and indifference has vanished from your sight; that your imaginations represent to your view the cares and duties and dangers, which belong to maturer years; that you feel yourselves under a new and more awful responsibility; that you are fearful, lest you should not fulfil your vows unto God; and looking forward to the end of your probation, lest at last you should fail of your reward: while, on the other hand, your hope is in God, and you view religion as requiring little more than a continuance of that fervent feeling, with which you are at the moment actuated, and which you cannot believe will be easily extinguished. In this you may be mistaken. Such reflexions, however, may well be supposed to arise in the breasts of the young, who are piously disposed, on the occasion of these solemnities.

Presuming, then, that this is actually the state of mind with many of *you*, I proceed to address you in reference to it: or, where it does not already exist, something resembling it may perhaps be produced by the train of thought, into which it will be my endeavour, with the Divine blessing, to lead you.

It is undoubtedly true, then, that you have now entered on a new responsibility: you have avowed your faith in Christ, and your solemn determination, with the grace of God, to live as persons, who expect to be judged by His holy law,

and have no hope of eternal salvation, but in His mercy. I need hardly remind you, that much is implied in such a profession: of the many thousands who have made it before you, with more or less of serious intention, how many are now living, as if nothing of the kind had ever entered their thoughts! and how many more, continuing to the last in the same state of unconcern, have passed into eternity! You are, therefore, embarked in an undertaking, in which, to say the least of it, it is easy to fail; and in which you cannot hope to succeed, but by the diligent use of all the precautions, which wisdom and experience recommend.

I. The first requisite, perhaps, is, that you be impressed with a just idea of the dangers of life, and especially of youth: when that period shall have been passed, not merely in innocence, but in Christian improvement, little is afterwards to be apprehended, though not so little, as to excuse you from vigilance and anxiety for your spiritual state. In youth you are by nature exposed to a combination of dangers, resulting from the violence of the passions, and from evil example, and from easiness of temper, and from want of experience, from precipitate decisions, from fascinating views of the world, and from a vain confidence, that as it will never be too late, abundant opportunity will be afforded you hereafter, of making up your minds on the subject of religion, and of living as it may require: in the mean time, if you conform to the received usages of propriety and decency, you will hold it to be sufficient for the present, and set your consciences at rest. It is my duty to warn you of the grossness of such delusion: unquestionably God *may* bring us to reflect and to inquire, at any period of our lives: but the question to be considered is, whether He *will* do this, when we have deliberately and perseveringly treated the matter as of little importance, compared with the worldly objects, on which we have set our hearts? The way, indeed, in which He usually brings such persons to reflect, if at all, is by some severe affliction; by the loss of friends, of health, or of fortune; by some change in their outward circumstances, which strips the world of its allurements, and impels them to seek a refuge with God. You will not say, that such an alternative is to be regarded without alarm: but something worse may happen. It may be that their delusion may continue to the end: year after year may roll away, without

bringing any signal warning; and the hand of death may be upon them, before they have examined their state. You have, therefore, no security but that of beginning well, and persevering in the right way: your safety lies wholly in your sense of the danger which threatens you on every deviation. And far easier is it to keep in the path of religion, than to recover it, when once it is lost: other paths will be pleasant to you for a time, and you will desire to quit them. True wisdom, therefore, will prompt you to resist the first solicitations of sin; you cannot listen to them, and preserve your powers of resistance unimpaired.

It is fit, however, that you should know the nature of such solicitations; for they are not confined to what the world condemns: you must appeal to a purer standard: the tempter assails the innocent and unsuspecting most formidably, when he would draw them into practices and indulgences, which, though they are at variance with the spirit of the gospel, are not, perhaps, subjects of common censure or remark. Be that as it may, there is mischief in every thing which has a tendency to the relaxation of genuine religious principle; in every thing which would oblige you to give up, or even to be remiss in habits, inculcated and prescribed by religion: in every thing which requires you, before you can give assent to it, to tamper with the conscience, to argue with yourselves from the practice of others, or to efface or soften down any virtuous and Christian impression. Whatever is really good and right, recommends itself at once to minds not corrupted by the world. This moral feeling is invaluable; and is therefore, by all means, to be retained: and thus it is, that a correctness of principle and a certain firmness of character will be found indispensable in your Christian career.

II. But then, in the second place, it were vain to talk to you about religious principle and Christian firmness, if you are to be left to suppose that they are absolutely within your own power. There could not be a more fatal error. In our fallen nature, "nothing is strong, and nothing is holy," but through the grace of God: we owe our knowledge, and still more our love, of what is good, to the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit: and our power of persisting in the practice of holiness is derived from the same source. No truth is more clearly laid down in the Scriptures: and it is illustrated in our

own experience. It will be, therefore, to little purpose, that you shall resolve to lead Christian lives, unless you will maintain a continual intercourse and communion with God. I do not exceed the truth, when I affirm, that prayer is as necessary to the well-being of the soul, as food is to that of the body. We have no spiritual strength without it: we are left to our natural weakness: for what confidence can we place in the divine protection, unless we seek it? or how can we expect to resist evil, if we take not the means to confirm ourselves in the love of that which is good? But these effects flow from prayer: we are sure that God will hear us, if we earnestly ask, that He will enable us to fulfil his commandments, and teach us to love his law: and as little can we doubt, if we believe in a gracious Providence, that He will direct us aright, when we submit ourselves entirely to his disposal. The very habit, indeed, of prayer is salutary to the soul: it keeps alive within us whatever is pure and holy; it creates in us an abhorrence of sin; it gives us an interest in the service of God; it dispenses a sanctifying influence, and places us above the world; not above the duties, or the charities, or the wants of life; that were, indeed, a delusion; but above its vicissitudes, its fashions, its corruptions and temptations. In the constant practice of prayer our nature is gradually changed: we are benefited by frequent and intimate intercourse with men, who are eminently good. How, then, can we fail to be improved, and even transformed, by the habit of holding communion with God? Let, therefore, the good resolutions, whatever they may be, which you have this day formed, be connected and blended in your minds with the need of Divine succour: our best resolves are, that we will do what we know to be right, with the help of God: but a part of every such purpose will be, that we will *seek* for that help, and cease not to pray for it from day to day, while we remain in this state of trial.

III. In the next place, however, let me remind you, that though our secret and individual wants should be the subject of *private* prayer, (and they cannot be fully represented in any other,) the religion of Christ could not be maintained in the world without the public service of the church: and to imagine that either supersedes the use of the other, is to mistake the proper objects of both. The uses of private prayer may be gathered, in some measure, from what has been

already said: but the service of the church is a public and continually renewed profession of our faith in Christ, and that not merely for our own sakes, but for the good of our brethren. If I might venture to make such a distinction, I would say, that self-examination, and contrition, and gratitude for especial mercies, are the principal features of secret devotion; which, however, refer chiefly to ourselves: whereas of public prayer, the prominent character will be, that it proclaims "glory to "God in the highest, and good-will towards men." We meet in this place to offer to the Almighty the tribute of our common homage, to give evidence to others of our faith in the Redeemer, and to show, that however some may think or act, *we* are "on the Lord's side;" that in a conflict between religion and irreligion, such as exists in the world, we throw our weight, whatever it may be, into the scale of the former: that we acknowledge our deliverance from sin and misery to be only through Christ; that we delight in beholding others making the same profession: that we can cordially join with our brethren in calling down on our common frailties the mercy of God, and his common blessing on our endeavours to serve him; and we attest, what in an age of religious empiricism and causeless separation is not unimportant, that we are in the unity of the church. It is not, however, my meaning, that social worship has no relation to private and individual wants; and as little should it be supposed, that in our most secret devotions our brethren are altogether overlooked: I speak only of these leading distinctions of the two, with the view of showing you, that both are necessary to the Christian. Let it, therefore, be your care to lose no opportunity of joining in the service of the church. Let your attendance be not casual, but regular. No measure of secret piety will excuse you. What you need not for yourselves, you will in charity ask for your brethren, and assist them in their prayers. Above all, you will feel it incumbent upon you, especially in this heathen land, to bear testimony unto Christ. It is, indeed, deeply to be lamented, that many of you may be thrown into situations, where religion is not publicly maintained: if, however, you shall feel the privation, (and such it must be to every Christian mind,) you will be the more anxious to avail yourselves of the public worship, whenever it may be had. It might, indeed, be expected, that they, who have

resided at stations, where no religious provision exists, would, on the first opportunity, direct their footsteps to the house of prayer. We do not, however, always find this to be the case: and we account for it by the melancholy truth, that men may live without religion, till they cease to think of it, or perhaps regard it with disgust. From this fact I will derive one word of advice, which however I would press upon you with all earnestness; that if God has blessed you with religious impressions, cherish and mature them by all the means which He has graciously afforded you, or they will become weaker till they are effaced for ever.

IV. But under the head of your religious obligations, I must not, especially on such an occasion, overlook the sacrament of the Lord's supper, to which you are henceforth to be admitted. I need not, indeed, explain to those, who have been competently instructed in the Church Catechism, the nature of that solemn ordinance; the ends for which it was instituted, or the blessings which it dispenses. You know it to be for a perpetual remembrance of the death of Christ, whereby we obtain redemption, and that in the worthy participation of it the spiritual principle within us receives fresh supplies of strength. It combines, in fact, all that is sublime, and tender, and humble, and holy in the character of religious adoration: self-examination, the confession of sin, pious resolves, thankfulness for our Saviour's love to us, the complete surrender of ourselves, "of our souls and bodies," to his service, and an acknowledgement of our faith in his blood, all of them co-existing in our minds and hearts with brotherly love and charity.

It is, however, a subject of deep regret that so many are found to excuse themselves from the table of their Redeemer. Some are unfit to appear there, as perhaps they themselves allege; and while they lay great stress upon the sin of receiving the sacrament unworthily, forget that they are guilty of the greater sin of not renouncing the course of life in which alone their unworthiness consists; while others seem to consider this sacrament as something which is left to their option, whether they will receive it or reject it: and yet our church has pronounced, that both the sacraments are "generally necessary to salvation;" meaning, no doubt, where they may be had. Both, indeed, are intimately connected with the great

object of the Gospel dispensation, "the remission of sins:" it was for this end that St. Peter called upon the people to be baptized: (Acts ii. 38.) and our Saviour, when at the institution of the other sacrament, he gave the cup to his disciples, declared it to be his "blood of the New Testament, shed for many, for the remission of sins:" (Matt. xxvi. 28.) and it is hardly possible to understand otherwise than in relation to the same sacrament, though not then instituted, that most awful saying of our Saviour, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you;" (John vi. 53.) It must not, indeed, be taken to mean the *mere act* of eating and drinking the sacred elements, but the spiritual use and application of it; in which, however, the act is supposed. But independently of these considerations, it may be enough for you to know, that this sacrament was ordained by Christ himself as a standing memorial of the one Great Sacrifice for sin: it cannot, therefore, be innocent, or even a matter of little moment, that any man shall deliberately refuse to bear testimony to the merits and the efficacy of that Sacrifice in the manner prescribed: it is, in truth, however it may be meant, little less than a denial of the Lord that bought him, (2 Pet. ii. 1.)

V. But among the topics of advice respecting your conduct in life, I must not be altogether silent on the subject of your worldly occupations. Religion, strictly so called, cannot engage all your thoughts, and the world has claims upon you in your several stations and callings: and yet even into your secular duties religion will enter, if they be discharged in a Christian spirit, and in due subordination to the law of God; with diligence and fidelity and integrity, and without suffering them to encroach upon religious principle, or to interfere with those obligations which have a distinct and immediate reference to the Almighty. This, however, is the great error into which persons of industry and enterprize are liable to fall: they attach too much importance to their secular pursuits, because these are useful to the world; and, probably, much more, because they are profitable and lucrative, they would make attention to business a plea for the neglect of every thing else. They seem to ascribe to it a merit, which supersedes religious obligations, as if religion were not enjoined on all men alike: as if it were required only from persons who have abundant

leisure, and who cannot otherwise occupy their time. Absurd as are all such pretences, they operate to a great extent. What is more common than the neglect of private and of family prayer, and even the desecration of the day of holy rest, upon the plea of the urgent demands on time? There cannot, however, be a plainer confession, that of such men the world is really the idol, to which they pay the homage due to God alone; nor do they consider, that wealth or reputation, or even secular usefulness, will avail them nothing to the pardon of sin, or that they cannot thus acquire the habits, and sentiments, and desires, which alone will prepare them for eternity.

It must not, however, be dissembled, that with a portion of our Christian population the disposition to excess in laborious employments is by no means prevalent: against bodily and manual labour there is even a prejudice: it is thought disreputable, and to be resorted to only in the case of actual necessity. Here, then, is an error of an opposite character: and though it operates very differently from the former, its effects are not less injurious. Idleness is incompatible with religion, as being the parent of vice and folly, and those pursuits are not favourable to it which require but little active exertion: they produce a general listlessness and indifference, which relax the mind, and render it as unfit for the practice of religion as for every thing else which demands resolution and firmness. It is true, that all cannot choose their occupations, and that all the offices of human life must be filled; but I would abate, if possible, the prejudice against manual employment: it is allied more nearly than some suspect both to virtue and to happiness. health and cheerfulness follow in its train: its habits are generally frugal and simple; the vigour of the body gives a tone to the mind, and its intervals of rest are periods of real enjoyment. Such a state is not ill adapted to the service of God: it is connected with humility and thankfulness for the measure of good vouchsafed, and with that teachable disposition which is the proper soil to receive the seed of the gospel.

VI. But let me not forget that many of you are removed, by the gifts of Providence, from the necessity of actual toil; and even they who will be most engaged, will have short intervals of time at their own disposal. In offering you advice,

therefore, for the conduct of life, something should be said upon the proper use of leisure. With respect, then, to those of you who may have much, I would earnestly recommend to you to consider it as a trust for which you must account. It is a plea in frequent use, and sometimes it is truly urged, that men have not spare time to do much good to others, or to advance their own improvement so far as they really wish; but where this plea cannot justly be used, there is a proportionate responsibility; and certainly they who are exempted from the *necessity* of close occupation, should consider that their privilege is rather in the *choice* of their employment, while others have their particular course of duty marked out for them, and absolutely enjoined. Our time, in fact, is our life; and it is not to be spent unprofitably, unless it can be supposed to be venial to live in vain. Consider, then, you whom Providence has favoured, (I speak to persons of either sex,) what opportunities are open to you for the exercise of benevolence; nor is this to be considered as confining itself to almsgiving, but as exerted in a general solicitude about the miseries of mankind, in patient thought how they may most effectually be mitigated, and in ascertaining and establishing the merits of those who have fallen into distress. Half the suffering in the world would be relieved, if the deserving could be distinguished from the worthless, and wretchedness could assert its claims free from the suspicion of imposture.

There is one use, however, of leisure, whether it be much or little, on which I should earnestly insist: I allude to your advancement in Christian knowledge. There cannot be a greater error, common as it is, than to suppose that religious studies may be allowed to terminate with the discipline of the school, or are dispensed with after confirmation; or, at the utmost, need be prosecuted no further, than by listening to instruction from the pulpit. With respect to the religious knowledge conveyed to us before the usual period of confirmation, it is necessarily very limited; and with regard to the instruction delivered from the pulpit, the improvement to be derived from it is much retarded by that scantiness of religious information which unhappily prevails in most Christian assemblies. Where a multitude are to be addressed, consisting of persons of very different attainments, and all of them to be in some measure benefited and improved, a competent

acquaintance with Scriptural subjects is requisite, even in the least informed.

My counsel, then, to all of you is, that you cultivate religious knowledge, according to your opportunities, especially in the study of the Holy Scriptures, assisted by the valuable and various helps which the divines of our church have provided: there is not, in fact, any doctrine or any duty taught by our religion, which they have not powerfully enforced, or any difficulty, except it be such as eludes our finite understandings, which they have not satisfactorily explained. I feel it, therefore, to be a cause of thankfulness, that the *tracts* and larger *treatises* of the SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE have, of late years, been abundantly supplied to every part of the diocese. The means of improvement are thus within the reach of all who really desire it, and whose wants shall be made known, as they easily may be, to any one of the members of the respective committees. It is, moreover, to the praise of that ancient society, as tending to enlarge the wide sphere of its usefulness, that it now adopts and disseminates books of general information, adapted, however, with the Divine blessing, to promote the glory of God. The age, indeed, in which we live is remarkable for a prevailing disposition, among almost all classes of people, to devote some part of their time to reading. It were, however, an error to suppose, that there is a proportionate advancement in Scriptural, or even in other knowledge. Much of the time spent in this way is utterly lost, as to any valuable purpose. It serves only to amuse, while, probably, it perverts the minds of those who can find no rational employment. Still it is not my meaning that Scriptural reading, or what is closely connected with it, should alone engage your leisure, if it be abundant; but I should not fulfil my purpose, in alluding to this subject, if I did not strongly urge the importance of your assigning the first place to that knowledge which will make you "wise unto salvation;" and let me add, of abstaining from such reading, as is at least frivolous, and, if it does no other harm, will give you a distaste for higher and better things. You, however, whose lot is humble, and who can have little time to spare from worldly occupations, will do well to keep to the Bible, and to the best helps to the true understanding of it: blessing God that He has afforded you a measure of

education, whatever it may be, and seeking to advance both your knowledge and your love of the Scriptures by a holy and a Christian life.

VII. In the last place, let me not dismiss you without adverting to the circumstances of the country in which your lot is cast. Among the nations around you the God of Christians and the Saviour of the world are unknown. Few of you can be ignorant of the endeavours which are made to bring the the heathen to a knowledge of the truth: but the truth will never beam upon their minds in its genuine lustre unless it be found to influence the lives of those who profess it. I cannot, indeed, repress the thought, how great the effect would be if all, or even the greater part of those, who from time to time are the objects of these solemnities, would through life remember their sacred engagements, and would think of the day with holy awe, when they pledged themselves before God to fulfil their baptismal vows. We should then see persons in various ranks of life, and in considerable numbers, going forth through these wide regions, not, indeed, actually to *preach* the doctrine of God their Saviour, but to *adorn* it; to exhibit in their lives and conversation the meekness, and the purity, and the charity of the Gospel, and to bear testimony to the truth of what is affirmed of them, that their hope of salvation is in Christ. Let, then, this idea, beloved, be realized in *you:* consider yourselves to be severally responsible, so far as the example of each of you may extend, for the opinion which the heathen may form of the religion of Jesus Christ, and for its consequent success in the world. To every one of you, various as your conditions in life will be, is assigned a part in the greatest work which God has ever delegated to man, the bringing of the nations out of darkness and the shadow of death into the kingdom of the blessed Redeemer. May the Holy Spirit keep these things in your remembrance, and "stablish you in every good word and work!"

AN

ADDRESS

TO

THE PARISHIONERS OF ST. PANCRAS,

MIDDLESEX,

ON

THE SUBJECT OF AN APPLICATION TO PARLIAMENT FOR A NEW CHURCH, &c.

BY

T. F. MIDDLETON, D.D.

ARCHDEACON OF HUNTINGDON; THE VICAR.

"Speaking the truth in love."

Eph. iv. 15.

AN

ADDRESS, &c.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

WHEN the proposal for erecting a church in my parish was first promulgated, it was my intention, without delay, to address you on this important subject from the various pulpits. I regarded it as a topic, not ill suited to the most solemn appeal to your reason and your feelings. I viewed it, not as limited to a single point of scriptural doctrine, or of Christian duty, to which the discourses of the clergy are, for the most part, necessarily confined, but as embracing within its compass every doctrine and every duty; that, without which, neither can the one be expounded, nor the other enforced,—the means of public instruction. In a parish, in which these are so remarkably withholden, especially from the poor, I conceive that I should be wholly negligent of the great trust reposed in me, if I did not endeavour to impress upon your minds the alarming extent of this evil, and your obligation to administer the remedy.

Circumstances, however, have subsequently arisen, which have made it impossible that I should adhere to my first purpose. In the dearth of argument against the proposal, recourse was had to a proceeding, which is always easy and not often unsuccessful; and that is, to impeach the motives of the person, who may easily be represented as the author of the project. The original resolutions of the meeting at the church were scarcely published, when the merits of the question were nearly overborne by the popular remark, that the plan had little else in view than the aggrandisement of the vicar. This assertion obtained credit the more readily, because the interests of the vicar, though in conjunction with those of the parish, were really contemplated at the meeting: for it might easily be shown, paradoxical as it may at first

appear, that such a conjunction of interests is not only possible, but that where it does not actually exist, in that parish something must be wrong. But the turn thus given to the question, as well as the heat and animosity excited by other causes, made it wholly unfit for discussion in a Christian assembly. I will never consent to desecrate the pulpit; it is appropriated to themes of high and universal importance: the passions of a party, and the selfishness of an individual, are alike beneath its dignity. The possible imputation of being influenced by such feelings, is sufficient to restrain the Christian preacher: it is among the unrivalled precepts of Gospel morality, to "abstain from all appearance of evil."

From these considerations, I am induced to address you through the medium of the press: I will dispatch the topics which respect myself, as briefly as possible, that I may proceed to others, which are more worthy of your attention.

In connexion with the plan for erecting a church in the southern and most populous district of the parish, it is proposed to sell the present vicarage house, and to build another near the future church, when it shall be completed. I forbear to repeat, and still more to refute, certain insinuations respecting my views in this particular. It has always been considered as highly expedient, that the minister, especially of a large parish, should reside where his duties require his presence. The present vicarage house is at the average distance of two miles from the great mass of the population, and one mile and a quarter from the parish church: it has been truly, though unfairly replied, that it is near the centre of the parish: the proposed plan, however, of providing a residence for the vicar near the intended church, will place him in the centre, not indeed of the 2,600 acres, of which the parish consists, but of the 40,000 inhabitants, who occupy less than a fifth of that space, near the southern extremity. It will immediately occur to you, that in expressing my readiness to remove to that quarter, I am not consulting my own ease: the calls of business will be increased tenfold: the portion of leisure which I now enjoy, I owe to the inconvenient distance of the vicarage house from the far greater part of my parishioners: the occasion must be urgent, which will induce them to go two miles from home. I should also add, that I cannot, on my own account, desire to quit the part of the parish, in

which I at present reside: it is recommended to me by the healthfulness of the situation, and by exemption from noise and interruption: but, more than all, by the friendly attentions of the inhabitants of the village, who uniformly consider and treat me as their pastor, and between whom and myself there exists, and I trust will long exist, a feeling of mutual regard.

On the subject of the commutation of the vicarial tithes and Easter offerings, I will endeavour to be equally brief. The revenues of this benefice have been long in a state of dilapidation; so that, unless the vicar will expose himself to the odium of living in hostility with those, whom he must wish to regard as friends, his emoluments must sink to the level of an ordinary rectory in the country, while the duties and responsibility in the latter (not to insist on the expenses of living) shrink from all comparison. In the commutation of the tithes, only a few individuals are concerned; and the annual amount which they admit to be due, is very inconsiderable: but Easter offerings, as is well known, are payable by all adults. Of the extreme difficulty of collecting these;—of the wanton trouble, in some instances, given to the collectors;—and the refusal of many others to pay them at all, without a summons from the magistrate;—I am unwilling to speak particularly: the subject is painful and degrading. I leave it to enlightened men to judge, whether this be a desirable mode of providing for the minister of such a parish as St. Pancras: their knowledge of the world will enable them to decide, whether a clergyman can be eminently useful where he is not respected, and whether respect be consistent with a state of vexatious dependence: and their sense of propriety will determine, whether it be not high time, that a parish with a population of nearly 50,000, should enable the head of their ecclesiastical department to live amongst them in a manner suited to his station, or should, as has heretofore always been the case, compel him, by an inadequate provision, to dedicate a great part of his attention to other objects, and to make the second cure in the metropolis a subordinate concern. By a statute of Henry VIII., the London clergy, in very many parishes, are entitled to a rate of 2*s.* 9*d.* in the pound on the actual rental; and the preamble to that act shows, that the circumstances which gave birth to

it, were precisely similar to those which now exist in St. Pancras. Those parishes, indeed, are generally of small extent: but it has been suggested, that an adequate provision in your own parish, would not be less than one penny in the pound to be paid on the rental in lieu of Easter offerings, and of all vicarial tithes whatever. But I speak of these things reluctantly, and gladly dismiss them. Among a variety of remarks reported to me by the collectors, there is only one which I am desirous to repeat to you: it is a question, which I am assured has been asked in every quarter of the parish: "Why have we not a church?" This question, together with a few considerations arising out of it, is the subject of the present Address.

It is only within a few years, that the parish of St. Pancras has risen to very great importance. Within the memory of some of you, the most populous part of it was the then small village of Kentish Town. Camden Town, Somers Town, and the multitudes of streets and squares on the southern side of the New Road, had no existence: the whole parish did not contain 800 persons. For the religious wants of such a population, the wisdom and piety of our ancestors had made ample provision: the parish church will accommodate about 200 persons, and the ancient chapel of ease at Kentish Town held, perhaps, nearly the same number: the rebuilding of the latter about thirty years ago, though upon much too small a scale, and with some aid from the trustees of the church lands, is every thing which has been done in this parish, during many centuries, for the maintenance of parochial religion. The other places of divine worship for the members of the establishment, are three proprietary chapels, a chapel of ease to St. James's, Westminster, and the chapel of the Foundling Hospital. It might be sufficient to say generally of these, that were they appropriated to the parishioners of St. Pancras, and open to the rich and the poor indiscrimately, they would still be insufficient: but that is by no means the case. The chapel of the Foundling Hospital, standing nearly on the boundary of St. Pancras, may be supposed to receive within its walls as many aliens as inhabitants of the parish, in which it happens to be situated: the laudable object of the governors requires them to accommodate those, who are willing to contribute to the charity, from whatever district they

may come: parochial considerations form no part of their concern. The chapel of St. James's is of a different character: it is parochial, though not so with regard to St. Pancras, in which it stands: its connexion is with a parish to which St. Pancras is not even contiguous: and it differs not, I believe, from other chapels of ease, except in the anomaly, that it is frequented, and must be so from its situation, almost entirely by the inhabitants of one parish, who can receive instruction only from the ministers of another.—Of proprietary chapels, whatever praise may be due to the zeal and talents of the clergy, who officiate in them, I do not profess myself to be friendly to the principle. Wherever they exist, they have arisen out of the deficiency of our parochial establishments; for which, however, they afford but a very inadequate substitute, while they contribute to perpetuate the evil: they cannot but render the more opulent parishioners, in many instances, indifferent about wants, which they themselves no longer feel. The principle, to which they owe their origin, is no other than that of commercial adventure. A builder observing that the spirit of Christianity is not wholly extinct, invests a portion of his capital in erecting a place of public worship. To what particular description of Christians it is to be appropriated, needs not be determined beforehand: trade is not fastidious about the opinions of a purchaser: and such is the tenure, that it is not permanently confined to the church, even though a churchman should be the first to license it: in the failure of success, it may be subsequently applied to any other more profitable purpose, whether sacred or profane.

I am afraid, however, that the evil does not always rest here; I am afraid, that even while buildings of this kind are in the hands of churchmen, the system has tendencies, which are greatly to be deprecated. Whether the proprietor be a layman or a clergyman, while his emoluments depend upon the letting of the seats, he is under a strong temptation to give to divine service attractions, which do not properly belong to it, and which, while they recommend it to those, who are in quest of amusement, degrade it in the estimation of the serious and reflecting. Christianity, in its native and noble simplicity, addresses itself not to the taste or the imagination, but to the understanding and the heart: it is not studious to adapt itself

to the variable standard of popular sentiment, but is, like its author, "the same yesterday and to-day and for ever." In this view, nothing can be more conducive to the maintenance of its true character, than that independence of principle and practice, for which our establishment usually provides. A clergyman, who does not labour under the consciousness, that it is his interest to attract hearers, has to blame himself alone, if he deviate from the track of solid and sober instruction. The system has also other tendencies, which are not to be desired. The great variety of preachers in some of these chapels, while it stimulates the religious appetite, cannot fail to deprave it; nor is public instruction productive of the greatest possible good, where little or nothing is known of the preacher, except from his sermon. I might also add, that these chapels sometimes interfere with the province of the parochial clergyman: the parishioners are not always aware, that the preacher of a proprietary chapel has no connection with them beyond the duties of the pulpit, and avail themselves of his ministrations to the exclusion of their constituted pastor, and the extinction of order and regularity.

In this part of my subject, I desire to be understood as every where speaking of the *system* and its *tendencies*. In my own parish, these chapels appear to be very well conducted: in my occasional visits to them I have found them most respectably attended; and I have constantly rejoiced that some at least of my parishioners have such a resource: but it will be remembered, that whatever is good in these chapels is the peculiar merit of the proprietor, while that which is objectionable is connected with the system, and that the one is changeable, while the other is permanent.

Of the three proprietary chapels in St. Pancras none is unusually large, and two of them certainly accommodate a great proportion of aliens. From the nature of them, it is not to be supposed that they afford any considerable convenience to the poor: it is not reasonable to expect that individuals should gratuitously do much to mitigate an evil, which whole parishes are backward to remove on account of the expence.

There is not any free-chapel in St. Pancras; neither do such chapels, though undoubtedly suggested by the purest benevolence, seem to answer all the ends of public worship: whatever tends to separate the rich from the poor in the

presence of Him, who is the maker of both, is so far exceptionable: let them, at least on one day in the week, "meet together:" to the rich it teaches humility, while it inspires the poor with confidence; and it serves to unite both in the bonds of mutual dependence and esteem.

In truth, the objects proposed are attainable in all their variety and in their full extent, *only in a parish church*. It makes religion visible: it invests the service of God with dignity and veneration: it connects the pastor with his parishioners, and the parishioners with each other: and it helps to stimulate the exertions of all, in what it has made a common cause: it excites an interest in that, to which in independent congregations the attention can be but rarely directed: I mean the concerns of a parish: in its order and good government; in its regulation and improvement; in the support of its charities, where it has such as might be expected, and in the foundation of them, where they are wanted: in short, the practical and civil results of Christianity must be looked for in the influence of the parish church. I press this point the more earnestly, from observing a prevailing prejudice in favour of chapels. It is commonly alleged, that two chapels would afford the *accommodation* of a large church; but accommodation is not all, which is desired; you want much more; you have as yet no parochial character, no pervading sentiment, no common feeling directed to a given end: you require not so much to be divided and distributed, as to be brought together. Christians are to be viewed not merely as worshippers of their Maker, but as members of society: and in society the lowest civil subdivision is a parish. In districts so populous as St. Pancras, I mean not to deny that parochial chapels are necessary, nor that proprietary chapels, in the existing circumstances, have their use: I contend only, that chapels of the latter description have arisen out of the want of the former, and that the former should not be adopted, except from the inconvenience of distance, or the insufficiency of the most spacious parish church. The great Christian principle is unity; unity not only of faith and fellowship, but to the utmost practicable extent, unity of worship, and a consequent unity of benevolence.

With these sentiments, I cannot be supposed to have been, during the short period of my incumbency, an indifferent

spectator of the condition of my parish. When indeed I was honoured with the offer of the cure, I observed little, which could encourage me to accept it: the first images, which presented themselves to my mind, were those of division and confusion. I saw a parish, which had grown enormously populous within half a century, at least a whole century behind in improvement. The lure of interest was out of the question: in quitting my country preferments, I should not increase my emoluments; while in point of ease, independence, leisure and tranquillity, the balance would be largely against me. Yet I reflected, that a clergyman not far advanced beyond the prime of life, and attached to the studies and duties of his profession, ought not, especially in these days, to shrink from difficulties; and I thought that I discovered in the charge of such a parish, whenever those difficulties should be removed, a field for honourable and useful exertion. Whether these views were visionary, it rests with you to determine.

Of the proceedings, which have already taken place, I will not disclaim any share of the responsibility, which properly belongs to me, nor will I arrogate to myself the praise, which is more justly due to the excellent persons, who have made me their coadjutor. To the meeting at the church I was certainly a party; and whatever may have been said against the origination of such a measure among a few, in a parish, in which there are above 6,000 householders, it is that very circumstance, which in the judgment of all of us justified the proceeding: and many of those, who have objected to it, must know, if they will calmly consider the question, that in no other conceivable method could the project assume any thing like form and consistency, or avoid being stifled in the birth. But it was only the *origination* of the measure, which the meeting had in view: its modification, its arrangement, its details, its improvement, its completion, and the means by which it was to be carried through every stage of its existence, were all to be submitted to parochial revision. For the present, the resolutions of the meeting were published; and, to save the session, notices were inserted in the Gazette. This, it was hoped, would be all, which considerate men would require: yet more was done; immediately, on the appearance of hostility, a proposal was made to the adversaries of the measure, to

suspend their animosity for a very short period, till its friends could fully digest their plan, pledging themselves in the mean time to desist from all further proceedings. But the proffer was instantly rejected; and it was resolved to appoint a "committee for opposing *any* and *every* application to parliament." It requires but little sagacity to ascertain what countenance the friends of the measure were to expect, if before they had formed the mere outline of their plan they had solicited the opinion of the vestry.

It is, however, the object of this address, to conciliate. Among our opponents there are some, who from their high consideration in the parish, their character, their property, and their attachment to the established church, were entitled to our especial regard. We should, indeed, have derived great benefit to our cause from their counsel and their influence; but many of them were absent from town; and to others the access was not so easy, as we might have wished, especially in the eastern division of the parish, which has few representatives at the board of directors, and appears to take but little part in parochial concerns. I have the greater reason to regret this circumstance, when I am told that there are persons, who scruple not to admit the expediency of the measure in all its extent, but who have joined our antagonists, avowedly because they were not among the first, who were consulted. I confess I hear such an argument with pain: it is distressing to reflect that private feeling should avail against an acknowledged public good, and that a little more of external respect, though the means of shewing it were not always obvious, might have secured a friend, where the want of it has armed an enemy. But I cherish the hope, that their resentments have by this time subsided: at the crisis of their indignation they were enlisted into the ranks of the opposition: but their passions, not their reason, approved the service: they will surely withdraw, or at least, if they cannot do this consistently, they will be passsive observers of the contest.

But a transient and excusable feeling of jealousy is not the only principle, against which the promoters of the bill have to contend. Self-love is more deeply rooted; and its fears have been excited to a feverish height, by unfounded statements; while in some instances the uninformed and unsuspecting have been purposely imposed upon, and sent forth to

propagate their credulity. It was not to be expected, that an object of such magnitude, as the erection of a spacious church, could be accomplished without any perceptible burthen: but when I admit that it will be *perceptible*, I hope that I have described it by its most unpopular epithet. It is clearly ascertained that a structure worthy of such a parish may be completed at no heavier expence to the parishioners than a rate of *sixpence in the pound;* and that at the end of about four years, when the fourpenny rate for liquidating the debt incurred to build the workhouse will have ceased, the whole amount of the church and poor's rates in this parish will be only *two shillings and sixpence* in the pound: you are probably aware, that this will be below the present burthens of almost every other parish in the neighbourhood of the metropolis: any objection, therefore, to the proposed measure, on the ground of expence, supposes in the objector a degree of parsimony, which, if it be felt by a few individuals in other parishes, as probably it may, at least is not there suffered to obstruct the general good. It is, indeed, alleged, that however light the burthen may be in ordinary cases, it will press unequally. I know of scarcely any burthen, against which the very same objection may not be urged: few general laws can be made to operate without partial inconvenience; but in the present instance, from what does this partial pressure arise? Is it, that the objector is engaged in some extensive mercantile concern? is it, that some profitable enterprise requires him to occupy much more than a dwelling? is it, that wealth and prosperity have enabled him to "join house to house, and to lay field to field?" I do not perceive the validity of any adverse inference derived from such premises. Every burthen imposed upon men in a state of society must be in proportion not merely to their wealth, but to the means which they withhold from others, of obtaining wealth. In the country, for example, if one man should occupy 1000 acres, it is surely reasonable that he should be charged towards the repairs of his parish church, and to other parochial burthens, the whole of the sum which would have been due from any number of renters of the same land: the burthen on great occupiers is only positively, not relatively, unequal: for their profits are, or ought to be, proportionate The very supposition that an objection founded on such an inequality,

as that which I have imagined, has any weight, is pregnant with monstrous mischief: the prosperity of individuals, instead of being a blessing to society, would be a calamity, if it were ever to be made the bar to public improvement; and in works of charity men might justify their ingratitude towards God on no better plea than the exuberance of His goodness.

In considering the expediency of building a church, there is another topic, which, however unwilling I may be to meddle with it, I am not permitted to pass over without notice. The parish of St. Pancras has long been known, as the abode, in a pre-eminent degree, of persons, who dissent, or at least secede, from the establishment. I will not enter into any discussion of the points at issue between the church and those who have left it: there is no subject, more likely to irritate feelings, which I would gladly allay: nor do the circumstances of this parish permit me, if I were so disposed, to charge the evils of separation altogether upon the separatist. That these evils are, in my judgment, most alarming, I will not suppress; and secession in the abstract, I mean without reference to the particular motives and pleas of the seceder, I cannot have any scruple in pronouncing to be foreign from the spirit of Christianity, and from the views of its founder. Of the religionists in question, many have my esteem: but we must not suffer our reverence of persons to warp our judgment of things. The excellence of these men consists in their piety, their zeal, and their active benevolence; virtues, however, which, together with all others, they might, if I mistake not, have practised to the same extent, and with greater effect, in communion with the church. In a state of division, Christianity loses half its worth and all its beauty.

On this part of the question I will advert only to one or two points: they have no connection with theological controversy. I have said, that I consider the separation from the establishment, to afford some ground of alarm: I do not see how it can be contemplated with indifference by any friend to his country. I am ready to admit, that no mischief is intended or foreseen by the great majority of those, to whom I allude: in general they may not be men, whom education, experience, or habit, has led to reflect on tendencies: they may only follow the multitude; they are naturally gratified by attention; they are struck by the impassioned gestures,

or won by the familiar address, of the preacher; they do not look forward to possibilities, nor do they look backward to realities; they are, for their purpose, more wisely employed; they are seeking salvation, where alone, as they believe, they shall find it. It is to little purpose to say, that these are religious, not political, proceedings; some particular mode of faith and worship, unless we would live in perpetual anarchy, must have an acknowledged ascendancy; in other words, must be *established*; and an establishment connects the interests of the church and the state. Religious divisions, if there be any reliance on history, the record of experience, invariably lead to political convulsions; and the process is very intelligible to every observer of human nature. Success in making proselytes generates a proud confidence in the truth of the principles:—numbers constitute strength;—and strength cannot be employed more legitimately than in exalting truth. The gradation is perfectly natural, and the reasoning, for all practical purposes, sufficiently conclusive: a few consequences are easily overlooked in the logic of ambition.

I would further suggest, that the religionists in question, however, they may be classed in vulgar apprehension among the adherents to the church, cannot wish to countenance the mistake: honourable men not only disdain imposture, but are anxious to correct the error from which they may derive advantage: when this anxiety has once been evinced, the blame of the mistake is entirely with those who are deceived through want of enquiry. It is commonly remarked, that many who have seceded from the church still retain its *liturgy*, and hence it is supposed that they are still in communion with the establishment. It is much to be regretted that even uneducated men are not better informed on a point of so much moment. The identity of a church consists not merely in its liturgy, but also in its discipline; and if it is to be inferred that every man is of the church of England who adheres to its doctrines, it may as well be argued, that every man is of the church of Rome who is attached to episcopacy: the doctrine and the discipline must both be considered in speaking of a particular church. Our church knows nothing of the ministrations of persons not episcopally ordained.

In offering these observations, nothing can be further from

my intention than to give offence to any class of Christians; my subject requires me, it even compels me to discriminate. We must not be told, when we are seeking accommodation for the poor, that to a considerable degree they already have it. They have it not in this parish, if they wish to remain in communion with that church whose discipline it is my duty to support, and whose preservation I sincerely believe to be inseparably connected with the piety, the morals, and the peace of England. In short, if to the class of Christians to whom I allude, I have any thing to object, independently of theological considerations, which I studiously avoid, and of political consequences, to which I think the well-disposed among them not sufficiently attentive, it is, that they are, on the whole, theoretical rather than practical men. I can hardly be misunderstood; I mean not to say, that they do not practise, as much as other men, what they profess, but only that their views of what is practicable are not warranted by any fair experiment. They seem to require in the aspect of society the purity of manners, and the holiness of demeanour, which are exceedingly to be desired, but which can hardly prevail in large bodies of men brought together fortuitously, however a certain degree of seriousness may be generally maintained among persons who congregate from similarity of sentiment to communicate their disgusts, and to lament, what indeed is every where visible, the corruption of human nature.

But though I have thought it my duty to offer some observations on the general character and mischiefs of division, I am ready to acknowledge that in this parish little or no blame attaches to the seceders; they may plead that they have no alternative. Are they to live without the public exercise of religion, and to bring up their families in heathen ignorance, because it is their lot to reside in a parish which has not provided for the religious wants of the members of the establishment? They are clearly required to sacrifice the weaker scruple to the stronger. It is the duty of every Christian to make public profession of his faith *in the Redeemer;* and if he cannot do this according to the method which his conscience prefers, and in the society of persons with whom he agrees in all essential points of doctrine and discipline, he is permitted, and even bound to join that congregation to whose tenets and practice his conscience is least repugnant.

I am well assured that such has been the reasoning of many among you, whose faith and virtues no longer illustrate the excellence, or support the credit of our national church. I am not, indeed, inclined to believe that the public attachment to the established religion, however discouraged by our neglect, is deeply impaired. Your own parish church is usually crowded long before the commencement of the service, and numbers are constantly seen to retire for want of accommodation. It is reasonable to infer that these frequent disappointments deter many others from a similar attempt; and that the same excellent disposition would operate in proportion to the encouragement afforded it by a suitable church placed in a more convenient situation. In the out-parishes of the metropolis all the churches are well attended, especially by the poor, where they have room.

But while we vindicate the persons who are thus constrained to make "divisions among us," what is to be urged in behalf of those "by whom the offence cometh?" To toleration, understood in any practicable sense, I am as much a friend as any man; but toleration supposes an establishment, as the exception supposes the rule; and in what manner are the poorer members of the established church treated in this parish? Not content with tolerating those who differ from us, we persecute those who agree with us; unless the withholding from them the mode of worship which they actually prefer, and compelling them either to embrace another, or else to live without any, deserve a milder appellation. It does not lessen the disgrace of this proceeding, that it is peculiar to the members of the establishment. It was stated at a late meeting, that the sectaries of various denominations within this parish have rather more than *twice* the accommodation in their places of worship that we have in our church and chapels. I believe the statement to be much within the truth; but who would ever have anticipated the inference, that therefore we have little need of a parish church? Has not this disproportion arisen in great measure from the want of provision for parochial worship, and especially of seats for the poor? But if such an argument have already some weight, in twenty years time it will be absolutely conclusive: the disparity will then be very much greater. Our population appears, from the returns to parliament, to be increasing at the

rate of 1,400 persons yearly; and if no provision be made for these in the established church, the argument will then be, that the sectaries have *thrice* or *four times* the accommodation enjoyed by the members of the church. Even then I should not think more highly of such reasoning, whatever might be my surprise, if it were not to prevail.

But it is not merely accommodation for adults which is required in St. Pancras: serious inconvenience arises from the want of a church in the *education of children*. This parish, like most others in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, abounds in schools. In an age in which so much has been written on this subject, I need not urge the necessity of inculcating religious principles in early life: I would, however, suggest, that it avails but little to inculcate such principles in private, unless they be matured into a habit; and that in a creature so constituted as man, religious habits, even if they be acquired, will not long be retained without the aid of public example. The lessons of the nursery must derive their efficacy from the service of the church. Of the boarding-schools in this parish, I have observed the children of several in the different chapels; though I have reason to know, that more of them would attend the service of the church, if they could any where find room. One of the first applications which I received on coming among you, was on this very subject. But of the children of the poor, it is impossible to hope that many of them are educated in the principles of the national religion. Of those at the workhouse, a portion attends at the parish church; the whole of them would occupy too much room: but the intended appointment of a chaplain will afford religious instruction to all of them; and I rejoice that such an appointment has at length been thought expedient. The children of the female charity-school have seats assigned them at *Fitzroy Chapel* by the kindness of the very liberal proprietor; and the ladies of *Kentish Town* have most humanely established a day-school for girls who regularly attend the village chapel. Of the remaining poor children of my parish, who amount to some *thousands*, I neither know, nor can know, any thing: many of them, I would hope, attend the service of the dissenting congregations; but many more, I fear, have never been accustomed to attach any idea of sanctity to the seventh day, but pass it in idleness, if

not in vice and profaneness. It is with the view of affording a remedy to evils like these, that the *National Society* is endeavouring to give efficacy to the admirable system of Dr. Bell; but unhappily that system cannot be introduced among us in the present state of this parish to any considerable extent. It is the object of that great instructor, not merely to teach the elements of useful knowledge, but to inculcate the principles of piety and order: not merely to enable the children of the poor to become more skilful mechanics, or more intelligent servants, but to make them the sons and daughters of their *country*, and to attach them to its venerable institutions by the force of early association. That they may "hear and hold fast the form of sound words," he does not commit them to chance, or to what is little more to be depended upon, the care of ignorant or irreligious parents, but he sends them to the parish church, wherever there is one in which they can be assembled, and places them, where our canons suppose them to be placed, under the eye of their parochial pastor, that they may be catechised, instructed, and confirmed in their Christian faith.

I feel, however, that I have trespassed on your time, and I hasten to conclude. I am sufficiently sensible, that where things have for some time been wrong, it is difficult to impress the mind with the necessity of amending them: in learning to endure, we at last become indifferent. But from this state of indifference, if unhappily we have reached it, it is time that the most torpid should awake. Of the parishes in the immediate neighbourhood of the metropolis, St. Pancras is marked by its backwardness in improvement; and two of the contiguous parishes have recently afforded it an instructive and salutary example. *Marybone* has obtained an act for building a church and two or more chapels; and of *Islington* it is impossible to speak in any other terms than those of admiration. With a population of less than a third of that of St. Pancras, and with a spacious parish church, which till lately was adequate to its wants, it has procured an act, authorising a rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound (though the whole is not yet required) for building a chapel of ease, and for an additional burying ground. I am well aware that so splendid an example is not the best suited to communicate the first impulse to emulation; but it is no less obvious to ask, what is there in the condition of a parish possessing a rateable rental

of *two hundred thousand pounds*, which can require it to shrink from comparison with the humblest of its neighbours? In what does St. Pancras differ from other parishes, *except in its wealth, the lowness of its poor's rate, and the want of parochial establishments?* But I trust that the era of our improvement has at length arrived: if not, younger men than myself may despair of living to see it. The same objections will continue to be urged, and the same interests exerted to defer it: but of these interests every year will augment the strength, and the objections it will be still more difficult to refute when they have been once triumphant. These reflections I earnestly recommend to all who would listen to the advocates for delay.

To the "details of the plan," which have already been submitted to you, I am not aware that much can be added: the luminous and comprehensive mind from which they proceeded, was not likely to overlook any thing of importance. I would only observe, that the proposed situation of the *new church* will be such as to afford the desired convenience in the highest conceivable degree. Supposing it to adjoin the New Road near the Bedford Nursery-Ground, it will be central to 35,000 parishioners, of whom the most *remote* will be within five furlongs of their parish church: besides, that the new and yet unfinished buildings are principally within half that distance. The present idea is to make the church capable of accommodating 2000 persons, leaving about *half the seats open*, and also to reserve a certain number for the use of the different *schools*. To such a church it is objected, that it will contain but a small proportion of the inhabitants: but it ought to be remembered, that this accommodation will be in *addition* to that which already exists; and that a church which accommodates twice on every Sunday 2000 persons, is adequate to the actual exigencies of a population of at least five times that number. In speaking of a congregation, we must omit the very old and infirm, the very young, the sick, persons absent from home, at least one servant in every family, the careless and indifferent, and those who attend other places of worship. With such a church, therefore, as that which is proposed, and with the enlargement of the chapel at Kentish Town, every cause of reasonable complaint will be effectually removed.

In conclusion, I request you to accept my solemn assur-

ance, that in the whole of this proceeding I have been actuated by a regard to the welfare of those whom Providence has committed to my care. I scruple not to confess the pain with which I contemplate the present state of this most important parish. My notions of what is right in matters of this kind may perhaps exceed what is actually practicable: it is possible that my temper may be sanguine; and in quitting my situation in the country, I may not have relinquished certain ideas of pastoral superintendence which do not altogether accord with the powers of a clergyman in the metropolis. These concessions, however, do not materially affect the question. No argument is weaker than that which maintains, that we should not attempt what is possible because we cannot accomplish all which may be desired. The condition of this parish is capable of almost incalculable improvement; and the foundation of that improvement must be laid, if any where, in the act for building a PARISH CHURCH. This will make you members of a new community: — it will excite a feeling for the common good: — the rising generation will be early trained to habits of piety: — the rich and the poor will assemble together before the Universal Parent: — you will acquire an interest in the honour and dignity of your parish: — parochial charities will start into existence; and the tablets which shall record your virtues, preserved to your descendants in the sanctuary of the Most High, will teach them lessons of piety and benevolence through the force of hereditary example. For myself, I declare, that whatever portion of health and activity a merciful Providence may yet reserve for me, it is my wish to devote it to your service. I cannot, if you will but enable me to be useful, desire a fairer field. I came among you with this intent; it was the only advantage offered me: it was not to be purchased without heavy sacrifices; but if I can obtain it, I shall feel no regret. To those who promote this great undertaking by their counsel, their influence, or their pecuniary aid, I offer my warmest thanks. In the midst of vehement and angry debates, I have to acknowledge, that scarcely in any instance have I been treated with personal disrespect: a few misrepresentations I can cordially forgive. I have found encouragement where I had least right to expect it; and some of those who have disappointed my hopes, have increased my esteem by candid and manly explanation. It is my earnest

prayer, that the Almighty may prosper the exertions which are directed to your temporal and eternal good; and that those of us, who are now estranged from each other by contrariety of sentiment, may yet "walk together in the house of God as friends."

I am, my Christian brethren,
With great respect and regard,
Your affectionate and faithful servant,

T. F. MIDDLETON.

St. Pancras Vicarage, Kentish Town,
25th November 1812.

A

LETTER

FROM

THE RIGHT REVEREND

THE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA,

ADDRESSED TO

THE REV. ANTHONY HAMILTON,

SECRETARY TO THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.

LETTER, &c.

Calcutta, 16th Nov. 1818.

REVEREND SIR,

I HAVE received your letter, conveying to me a copy of the proceedings of the Society in the month of March last, on the subject of India missions; from which it appears, that the Society have placed at my disposal the sum of 5,000*l.*, and invite my more particular suggestions as to the most prudent and practicable methods of promoting Christianity in this country. The Society may be assured, that I have been much gratified by this communication, and that I shall, with the Divine blessing, heartily co-operate with them in an enterprise so honourable to our established church, and commenced under auspices which give it the character of a national effort to disseminate in these regions our holy faith in its purest form.

In offering to the Society my opinion as to what may be prudent, with reference to the *safety* of the measure, I can feel no embarrassment: the *danger*, generally speaking, of attempting to propagate Christianity in this country, is not the difficulty with which we have to contend: ordinary discretion is all that is required: and every proceeding I should consider to be safe, which did not offer a direct and open affront to the prevailing superstitions. In any attempt to enlighten, to instruct, or to convince, experience has abundantly shown that there is not the smallest ground for alarm; and this, I believe, is now admitted by many, who once regarded such attempts with manifest apprehension. A more remarkable change of sentiment has seldom been effected within so short an interval.

The question, however, what may be practicable, so as most effectually to further the Society's views, is much more comprehensive. Experience does not hold out much encouragement to efforts, which rely for their success entirely on the effect to be produced by preaching; they seem rarely to have excited any interest beyond that of a transient curiosity: the minds of the people are not generally in a state to be impressed by the force of argument, and still less to be awakened to reflection by appeals to their feelings and their fears: and yet preaching must form a part, a prominent part, I apprehend, in any scheme for the conversion of these people: what is further required seems to be a preparation of the native mind to comprehend the importance and truth of the doctrines proposed to them: and this must be the effect of education. The Scriptures must also be translated, and other writings conducive to the end in view.

To embrace and combine these objects, therefore, I would have the honour to recommend to the Society the establishment of a Mission College, in the immediate vicinity of this capital, to be subservient to the several purposes: —

1. Of instructing native and other Christian youth in the doctrines and discipline of the church, in order to their becoming preachers, catechists, and schoolmasters.

2. For teaching the elements of useful knowledge and the English language to Mussulmans or Hindoos, having no object in such attainments beyond secular advantage.

3. For translating the Scriptures, the liturgy, and moral and religious tracts.

4. For the reception of English missionaries to be sent out by the Society, on their first arrival in India.

It may be expected that something should be offered in explanation of my meaning, under each of these heads.

1. One object proposed in this establishment is the training of native and Christian youth to be preachers, schoolmasters, and catechists. Such, I have no doubt, might be found in sufficient number, when it was understood that they would be fostered in a respectable establishment, with the assurance of an adequate provision upon leaving it: and I am clearly of opinion, that though native teachers by themselves will never effect much, our religion will make little progress in this country without their aid: the native Christian is a

necessary link between the European and the Pagan: these two have little in common: they want some point of contact; the European and native mind seem to be cast in different moulds: if the Hindoo finds it very difficult to argue as we argue, and to view things as we view them, it is scarcely more easy for us to imagine ourselves in his condition, and to enter into the misconceptions and prejudices, which obstruct his reception of the truth: the task is much the same as that of a man, who, in the full maturity of understanding and knowledge, should endeavour to divest himself of these, and to think as a child.

It may have been observed, that I have mentioned the education of native and *other* Christian youth: in which I include a class of persons who, though born in this country, are to be distinguished from natives usually so denominated, being the offspring of European parents: and I had more especially in view the sons of missionaries, who might be glad to avail themselves of this opportunity to bring up their sons to the same profession. It may not, perhaps, be improper to add, that, when I was in the south of India, specific proposals of this kind were made to me by missionaries of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

2. Another of the objects proposed is to afford to native children instruction in useful knowledge, and especially in the English language, without any immediate view to their becoming Christians. It seems now to be generally believed, that little effect can be produced by preaching, while superstition and extreme ignorance are the prevailing characteristics of the people. We have not here, indeed, to encounter barbarism: the impediments to conversion are probably much greater than really rude and uncivilized life ever presents: the progress of our religion is here opposed by discipline and system; and by these alone, with the Divine blessing, can it ever make its way: the tenets of superstition are inculcated in early life: the popular writings are generally tales familiarising the mind with the achievements of Hindoo divinities; and the Brahmin possesses an almost unbounded influence over the people committed to his care. While this state of things prevails, the truths of the gospel are heard unheeded: they are not perceived to be truths, nor is there much disposition to examine them: they appeal to no recognised prin-

ciple, and they excite no interest: the Hindoo, if he reflect at all, finds atonement in his sacrifices, and a mediator in his priest.

It is conceived, therefore, that one great instrument of the success of Christianity will be the diffusion of European knowledge: it seems almost impossible that they, who in their childhood shall have been accustomed to use their minds, can ever afterwards be capable of adopting the absurdities and reverencing the abominations now proposed to them as truth, and the acceptable worship of God: it is hoped that by enlarging the sphere of their ideas generally, we shall teach them to enquire at least upon subjects, on which we do not professedly instruct them: and that they, who have been emancipated from superstition, may in time be brought to a knowledge of Christ.

I have, however, laid particular stress upon the teaching of English: if this were generally understood through the country, it would, I doubt not, entirely alter the condition of the people: it would give them access to our literature and habits of thinking; and the familiar use of it would tend very much to dissipate the prejudices and the indifference, which now stand in the way of conversion. Our language is so unlike every thing Oriental, not merely in its structure, but in the ideas to which it is made subservient, in imagery, in metaphor, and in sentiment, that a competent acquaintance with it seems unavoidably to lead the mind of a native into a new train of thought, and a wider field of reflection. We, in learning the languages of the East, acquire only a knowledge of words; but the Oriental, in learning our language, extends his knowledge of things.

The introduction of our language, however, into this country to any great extent, is, in the present state of things, to be wished for rather than to be expected. To the acquisition of it there has not been much inducement. For almost every purpose of intercourse with the natives, we have learnt their languages, instead of inviting them to learn ours: the effect of which has been, that they have hitherto known little more of our religion, our science, and our institutions, than may have transpired in an intercourse which had other objects in view. Still, however, parents are found, who are anxious that their children should acquire our language, especially in

the neighbourhood of the presidencies; and this disposition is increasing: a knowledge of English is found to facilitate the intercourse of the natives with the commercial part of the community, especially since the opening of the trade; and it is useful in some of the public offices. Of this disposition, we should avail ourselves as far as we can: neither is there a backwardness to attend schools for instruction in general knowledge; the only restriction is, that we do not introduce the Scriptures, or books directly inculcating our religion; and even that is by no means rigidly enforced.

3. In the third place, I would make the Mission College subservient to the purpose of translations. Much has, indeed, been done or attempted in this way; but by no means, as I have reason to believe, so much and so well, as to make this department of missionary labour superfluous or unimportant. We still want versions, which, instead of being the work of one or two individuals, should be the joint production of several, taking their allotted portions of Scripture, submitting their tasks to approved examiners, and sending the whole into the world under the sanction of authority. Rapidity of execution, and the carrying on of many versions at the same time, should not be among the objects aimed at: it is not to be expected, that standard works can be thus produced. To the same department would be committed translations of our liturgy, that thus copies of the prayer-book might accompany the Scriptures: hence also might emanate translations of useful tracts, or original ones better adapted perhaps than any which yet exist, to the use of the natives: and it would be proper to include under this head what probably has not yet been attempted, I mean something which might convey to converts an idea of the nature of Christian society, and the constitution of the church. Success, however, in this department, evidently supposes the College to be well established, and great progress to have been made in the languages by the persons connected with it; and at no period, perhaps, could it supply the number of labourers required: but it would doubtless receive assistance from without from persons abundantly competent to afford it, and be a point of union for the exertions of all, who would wish the native Christianity of India to be that of the established church.

4. In the last place, I consider the College as affording great advantages to missionaries coming from England, upon their first arrival: they would here live in the society of persons, whose minds were directed to the same pursuits: they would have in the moonshees attached to the institution every facility for acquiring the languages: they would have the use of books, and they would acquire a knowledge of the manners and opinions of the natives, before they proceeded to their destined scene of duty. Every missionary must, in fact, have been a year or more in the country, before he can be at all efficient; and no where could he pass this interval so profitably as in such an establishment.

It is obvious, however, that this plan will require considerable funds. The 5,000*l.* already voted will probably be sufficient to defray the expence of all requisite buildings, including the purchase of land. The annual expence of the establishment is a subject of separate consideration: in the beginning we should require at least two persons, and afterwards three, to be permanently attached to the seminary, as professors or teachers: and these should be clergymen of the church of England. The salary of the senior could not be well less than 400 sicca rupees per month, or 600*l.* per annum; and that of his colleague or colleagues 300 sicca rupees per month, or 450*l.* per annum; and I should hope, that men well qualified for the work, and really actuated by zeal in such a cause, (without which all other qualifications would be useless,) might be induced to accept the appointments: in addition to the salary, a residence capable of accommodating a family would be assigned to each. Two moonshees or native teachers would cost together about 100*l.* per annum. Ten students, as above described, might be fed and clothed for about 500*l.* per annum; and a small establishment of servants would require about 100*l.* per annum. These different heads of expenditure make up an annual sum of 2,100*l.*, supposing three professors; or 1,650*l.* with two. Besides this, a printing establishment would in a few years require to be supported; and native schools would also be attended with some expence (about 36*l.* per annum) for every school of one hundred children, besides about 20*l.* for building a room or shed; but for this I have little doubt, that the liberality of the Indian public would in great measure provide, as has lately been

done with respect to the schools of the Calcutta Diocesan Committee. I do not know of any contingent expences, except repairs, which in the case of new and substantial buildings could not amount to any thing considerable for the first twenty years.

But we are to recollect, that our institution has for its leading object the education of persons who are afterwards to be maintained as missionaries, catechists, and schoolmasters, and to act under and in concert with missionaries to be sent out from England. I suppose every missionary station to be the residence of an English missionary (a clergyman), one or two missionaries educated in the college, and who might perhaps be ordained, or a missionary and a catechist, and a schoolmaster, all from the college. This would be the state of things when the system was in full action, and any considerable progress had been made. The English missionary would be indispensable to direct the course of proceedings, and to give respectability and energy to the mission: while the native missionaries would be necessary not only for the tasks assigned them, but to give the English missionary easier access to the natives, and to assist him in encountering opinions and habits with which an European must be less conversant. It is difficult to determine, or rather to conjecture, how many stations, thus constituted, the college, with the proposed number of students, might in any given period supply: much, of course, would depend upon the age of admission and the time required for their studies, according to which the succession would be quicker or slower: but the admission might be so regulated as to supply any demand not beyond its actual power, which demand would be limited by the funds applicable to the support of missionaries, &c. brought up in the college. Upon any reasonable supposition, however, a college of ten students would very soon supply all that could be required for three missionary stations constituted as already described; after which, if necessary, the admissions might be reduced. With respect to the English missionary, who should be a clergyman, he would require a salary of 250*l.* per annum, and his assistants from the college from 150*l.* to 80*l.* each, according to the class of persons to which they belonged; or among them 350*l.* per annum, — and small

dwellings, or bungalows, as we call them in this country, should be provided; of which, however, the original cost is little, and it could not frequently recur. Independently of this charge, and of a small chapel at each station, to be built in due time, which might cost perhaps 500*l.*, we should have three missionary stations well provided, at the expence of 600*l.* each, or 1800*l.* for the three; and if these should have the blessing of God, and means were found to extend the system, it might be done almost indefinitely with a moderate addition of expence within the college; without any, in fact, till it should be found necessary to increase the number of students.

But in this detail of annual expenditure, which I should hope does not exceed what may be expected from the public benevolence at home, when appealed to by the highest authorities, and assisted perhaps in India, I should observe, that some time must elapse, even in the most prosperous commencement of the work, before the funds required can be nearly so considerable as I have here supposed. The expence, which is to accrue without the walls of the college, could not arise for some time; and even the whole of the charge for students would not be immediate, inasmuch as the professors or teachers must devote some time after their arrival to the acquisition of the languages, before they could instruct pupils unacquainted with English. The establishment would at first consist of the two English professors, perhaps a very few pupils acquainted with our language, two moonshees, and a few servants. In process of time, indeed, such an institution might, if blessed by the Almighty, multiply its labours and extend its operations through so wide a field as to baffle all present calculation of its future wants: but the Society, I apprehend, will not consider this remote contingency as an objection to such appropriation of any resources which Providence may place at their disposal.

No funds, however, can ensure a reasonable prospect of success in such an undertaking, unless the persons selected to execute it have the requisite qualifications. The clergymen, sent out to conduct the labours of the college, must possess considerable endowments, he, of course, especially, who is to be at the head of it: they should be, if not distinguished for general scholarship, at least respectable divines, acquainted

with the Scriptures in the originals; of frugal and laborious habits; and possessing a talent for languages: and without a certain ardour of character, a deep feeling of the importance of the duties committed to them, and a disposition to value success in such an enterprise more than that in any other human pursuit, they would not, I fear, answer the end proposed. The senior should not, I imagine, be more than thirty years of age, and his colleagues might be somewhat younger. With respect both to the professors and the missionaries, I would observe, that temper and manner are here of the utmost importance: the natives require in their teachers great patience and mildness: they do not feel strongly themselves, and they are easily disgusted by any thing like asperity or irritation. I hardly need add, that they should be men of sedate habits and of serious piety: the natives look for these qualities in all, who seem to them to set up for teachers, though they do not find it, or perhaps expect it, in their hereditary priesthood. Vacancies in the professorships should, I conceive, be filled up from among the missionaries, not with reference merely to seniority, but to merit and qualifications.

You will observe, that I have supposed the college to be in the immediate vicinity of Calcutta: several considerations make this expedient. The time appears to have arrived, when it is desirable that some missionary endeavours at least should have a visible connection with the church-establishment: the natives have a preference, all other things being equal, for that which is countenanced by authority; and this seems to point out the propriety of placing this establishment within the bishop's reach (I speak for myself and my successors), that they may in some measure superintend its proceedings, and make it apparent that the propagation of our religion is not a matter of so little interest with us, as to be left entirely to persons whom none of the constituted authorities avow. Supposing the college to be in or near Calcutta, the bishop might act as visitor; but he could not otherwise, in any degree which could be of use.

Another circumstance, however, seems to indicate the propriety of the proposed situation: I speak with reference to the literary labours connected with the college. Trans-

lations will require a concentration of all the learning which can be brought to bear upon the subject; and here, if any where in India, is this aid to be looked for: besides, that translators will here have access to books which the college-library might not for some time supply. To these considerations I will add what is, indeed, but an indirect advantage, yet ought not to be wholly overlooked, that such an institution in or near to Calcutta will attract the observation of our countrymen, serving continually to remind them of the great object to which it is directed, and to interest them in promoting it.

Upon the subject of the vote of credit, I ought to observe, that at the present, and I believe the usual rate of exchange, I should draw upon the Society's treasurer to great disadvantage: at this period the loss would be from 12 to 15 per cent. The most advantageous mode of remittance to India is considered to be by the transmission of dollars, when they do not bear a very high price in London.

I have thus, Sir, complied with the request of the Society in offering them my sentiments upon the subject of their inquiry. In conclusion, I beg leave to add, that the crisis is such as not to admit any delay, which can conveniently be avoided. I regret, indeed, exceedingly, that from my ignorance of the Society's further views, and future resources, I cannot immediately avail myself of their vote of credit for the purposes here detailed: a year is of great importance, and yet a year must be lost. It may appear perhaps that the plan, which I have recommended, is somewhat extensive: no scheme, however, which is narrow in its first conception, or not capable of an almost unlimited expansion, is suited to the temper of the times, or to the circumstances of this country. Our power is now established throughout this vast peninsula in a degree which, but a few years since, the most sanguine did not contemplate: civilization and religion may be expected in the ordinary course of Providence to follow the successes of a Christian state; and in every view, religious or political, ought we to desire, that the faith adopted, and the opinions imbibed, may attach the people to our national institutions, and more firmly cement the connection of India with the British crown.

I request you, Sir, to assure the Society of my cordial desire to forward their benevolent designs to the utmost of my power, and that I pray the Almighty to direct them in all their deliberations.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful servant,

(Signed) T. F. CALCUTTA.

THE END.

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